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THE
HEATHENS OF THE HEATH.

A ROMANCE,
INSTRUCTIVE, ABSORBING, THRILLING.

BY WILLIAM McDONNELL,
AUTHOR OF EXETER HALL, ETC., ETC.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY D. M. BENNETT,
335 BROADWAY.
1874.

PS 8475

D66

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PREFACE.

OWING to the great success attending the publication of "EXETER HALL"—a theological romance, now entering its fourth edition--and moved by what I believe to be a marked necessity of the times, I have been induced to pen the following pages, and to lay them also before the liberal and intelligent reader.

The work having been written under some difficulties, at various times and in various places, it is to be hoped, that whatever criticism may be bestowed upon it shall be in a spirit as generous as it is just, and that it may be always borne in mind, that, in giving these pages to the world, the disenthralment of his fellow men from degrading usages, prejudices and beliefs has been the sole object of

THE AUTHOR.

LINDSAY,

Ontario, Canada,

September, 1874.

THE BEATINGS OF THE HEART

CHAPTER I

THE HEART

THE HEART IS THE CENTER OF THE BODY, THE SOURCE OF LIFE, THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE.

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THE HEATHENS OF THE HEATH.

CHAPTER I.

PENDELL CHURCH.

IN the waning light the old church rose with its ivied drapery above the surrounding trees, and its ancient tower still stood proudly erect, as if to over-top the range of northern hills by which it was sheltered. The iron bird long perched over the same turreted structure, was now immovable in the calm sky; it gave no indication to the waiting mariner, and from its elevated pivot in the motionless air, it looked towards the slumbering ocean on the south, as if intently watching the gradual disappearance of some distant sail.

How many centuries must have passed since the deep foundations of that old grey edifice were laid; how many generations must have been swept away since the first huge stones of Pendell Church were buried in the earth! It was a venerable pile that seemed to link the present with antiquity. For the last two or three hundred years men had been wondering at its great age; it appeared to have gradually risen from the enriched soil and verdant surface, and as the mysterious up-growth of piety, to have escaped the ravages of time, in order to mark one sacred spot to which various and successive races of men had come, through emotions of love or fear, to exhibit forms

of faith and worship in song of praise or bloody sacrifice; and stout buttress, massive wall, and lofty tower, still clutched the solid earth, as if determined that their union should last forever.

What a strange, strange history has this Pendell sanctuary; what varied scenes, what dark intrigues, what holy strife, and what sad events were enacted within and around its very walls! Yet there it stood, the mute record of life and death; and from that same sad record tales of sorrow and rejoicing, and of revenge and blood, were told by mossy rock or at the winter fireside, by old men who had heard the same legends from their grandfathers; and traditions of superstition, intolerance and devastation, were related as incidents of that same dark history.

These singular traditions taught also, that, long before Druidical worship was known in Britain, certain missionary tribes from a remote land,—from India, from Egypt, or from Persia,—had erected huge stones around the very site of Pendell church, and its enclosed graveyard; and the space that was now nearly covered with mossy, crumbling tombs, and with graves almost hidden in the long, rank grass, was, perhaps, once included in the "sacred circle," within which religion was inculcated by strange, mysterious ceremonies, either in worship of the triad of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, or of Osiris, Isis, and Horus, or by the Persian or the Parsee, while bowing before the effulgent Sun in adoration of the great Ormuzd; and then in the course of time, when these and other deities had been superseded, Woden and Thor had here their votaries; and here, too, beneath the shadow of some ancient oak, once stood the Druidical altar, its white-robed priest and his devout attendants.

Though the idea of a supreme power, or of a future state, has not been universal, yet, from the beginning, from our earliest knowledge of the remote past, we find that man, in almost every clime, has been a worshiper. With rare exceptions, almost every tribe or nation has paid homage to some great superior, either real or fancied.

Some have seen the placid smile of deity in the early sun-beam; others have trembled to hear his angry voice in the midnight tempest; but man's noblest emotions have ever been awakened while acting in submission to that controlling power which his imagination has depicted as being the most beneficent. A compassionate deity has always been more beloved than the Omnipotence which has been represented as jealous and revengeful; and if man truly "paints himself in his god," the liberality or intolerance of a people may be assumed according to the character of the deity they are known to reverence.

The first simple worshipers at Pendell, in the fulness of their gratitude, gathered the most beautiful flowers, which they might have fancied as being the plumage of angels wings, and presented them as a thanks offering to their kind genii; others brought forth the rich, ripe fruit to Budha, or to Isis; while suppliants to a deity more stern and exacting, offered their weapons and their animals; and frantic votaries, eager to propitiate some incensed god, lacerated their own flesh, or shed the blood of the human victim, or bade the mother give her infant to the flames; and when it was considered urgent to appease the anger of a furious deity, holocausts of human beings were remorselessly offered.

But then, with the flight of time, the gods of India and Egypt, and Persia, were forsaken, and on came the conquering Roman into Britain with his chief divinities, and with his Lares and Penates. He gradually undermined the Druidical altar, and erected the statue of Jupiter; and then, long after the ancient Celtic worship had been set aside, as connected with the national faith, Constantine came and dethroned the Roman gods; he brought back the cross, a symbol which had been venerated by the nations of antiquity; he compromised with the heathen: much of the creeds and many of the rites of paganism were incorporated into the new faith, and in time, after the statue of Jupiter at Rome had been pontifically blessed and metamorphosed by the Church into the veritable statue of

the apostolic Peter, many of the great old standing stones of the "sacred circle," or "giants' dance," at Pendell, were tumbled down to form the foundation of its venerable Christian sanctuary.

Now in the soft eve, while the red light faintly lingers in the west, while there is a hush on earth for departing day, and a calm in heaven as the vesper star appears; now when the feelings are subdued and solemnized, let imagination bring back some of the scenes and characters connected with the old church of Pendell. Though centuries have passed, it seems but yesterday since there was here seen a grand procession of priests, monks, and other votaries, headed by mitred bishops and lofty dignitaries. They came to consecrate this building, erected in place of the primitive, wooden cathedral built by the semi-pagans of the early Saxon times; to bless the earth destined to receive the bodies of the deceased faithful, and to anathematize the incorrigible who still remained outside the pale of the true church. The simplicity of paganism, and of the primitive form of Christian worship, had been gradually eclipsed by a brilliant and ostentatious ceremonial, and here was a religious display in keeping with the increasing power and assumption of the priests of the new national faith. Onward moved the mitred ecclesiastics; crosses and crosiers, and spangled vestments glitter in the sunlight, and the silver censors flash in the clear air as they are swung to send out the fragrant incense; strains of music reach the ear, and as the procession, in all its religious pomp, winds slowly around the sacred edifice, a hundred devotees kneel on each side of the advancing dignitaries, while a crowd of others follow in the attitude of humble reverence.

The grand circuit is thrice made; the ground, oft moistened with the blood of religious victims, has now been sprinkled only with the sacred water of the church. The procession re-enters the building, but all do not follow. Some from the crowd hurry off to a little distance, from which, perhaps, to view another ceremony—there is to be

another. Over a hundred years before that time, when barbarous Saxon priests met here to dedicate the first rude Christian church in the Pendell valley, the religious instinct of the period led them to require a sacrifice, and one of the remaining Pagan priests of Britain was piously slaughtered, as a peace offering, a short way beyond the Christian altar. Alas! that that sacrificial instinct, so foreign to humanity, should have become hereditary in the Christian Church!

Again the procession moves out slowly from the building; it is now headed by a score of tonsured monks with bare feet. Their coarse gowns are tied around the waist by a kind of rope; each monk holds a small wooden cross, and between the two stout brethren in advance there limps a decrepid man whom they are leading towards that great lone standing stone near the highway. The old man is one of the irreclaimable children of Abraham; he believes only in Moses and the prophets—not in Christ. Though hated and despised, one more chance of recantation had been offered him by the mercy of the Church, but he was true to the tradition of his fathers—that offer had been rejected; and, now, as one of the polluted race, he is decreed unworthy of life. See! they have chained him to the great stone; the sturdy monks pile up the fagots that seem to thirst for flame. The mitred bishops and the priests and their pliant followers stand reproachfully before him, and while the grey-haired Jew is terrified by curses and denunciations, he is told to kiss the cross which is held towards him. The old man is weeping, but that cross is an idol to him, and he turns aside his head.* A resolute monk thrusts it into the victim's mouth; the tears and blood of the old man mingle, but none can pity. In fierce haste the torch is applied, and as the flames leap up, the shouts and imprecations of the furious crowd drown the groans of the feeble sufferer.

In a few minutes more the last anathema is uttered, and

* Giordano Bruno who was burnt by the Dominicans at Rome, refused to kiss a crucifix held out to him for that purpose.

while the monks remain to feed the flames, and prevent any chance of rescue, bishops, priests and people return to the church. A number of sacred relics are to be enshrined—a piece of the true cross, a nail, the beard of an apostle, and the bones of a martyr, are displayed before the wondering faithful, and then deposited. The fragrant incense enters the silver shrine, and again clouds the lighted altar; a *Te Deum* is sung, the benediction is pronounced, and the consecration of Pendell church is completed.*

* The veneration for relics in the Church of Rome is, among many of its adherents, as great as ever. The following extract is from a Canadian paper, dated Sept. 22d, 1873.

"RELICS FOR ST. MICHAEL'S CATHEDRAL.—An unusual event took place yesterday afternoon in St. Michael's Cathedral, being the deposition of certain relics under one of the altars. The remains are reputed to be those of Saint Victor, one of 10,203 soldiers of the Emperor Diocletian, and commanded by Saint Zeno. These soldiers refused to sacrifice to the gods of heathen Rome, and were put to death, after forced labor at the Baths of Diocletian for seven years. The bodies were buried at Tre Fontani, where it is believed St. Paul had suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Nero. His Grace, the Archbishop, while on his late visit to Rome, procured these remains to be placed under an altar in the Cathedral for the veneration of the Catholics. The relics were beautifully encased in wax. A solemn procession was formed in the garden, the body of the martyr being borne by a train of the clergy in full ecclesiastical vestments, and by them deposited in its resting place. After vespers a brief history of the life of this Saint was given by the Rev. Archdeacon, and the ceremony closed with the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament."

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CHAPTER II.

CHRISTIAN HARMONY.

IN past times when the Church was all powerful, when it might be said there was but one true church in all Christendom, when no important disputes occurred on doctrinal points, although loud and bitter discussions took place on the grave question of how priests and monks should shave their heads, or wear the tonsure, then not more than one book might be found in a parish, or not more than one man who could read it; then, many prelates could not even write, and priests, and monks, and friars roamed as beggars, or as robbers through a hungry land. Nearly all of the baptized faithful—slaves or free-men—then grew up to be ignorant, brutal, and ferocious; and then the legitimate business of kings seemed to be but wanton rapine or murder. Then, Christian nations were most faithless, and Christian men and women were most faithless; and then Christian priests were most numerous; and, though not licensed to shed human blood, yet might follow armies, and stalk through the battle field, and with iron headed mace dash out the brains of wounded enemies; and then, also, for the commission of even petty offences, gashed and mutilated creatures could be found almost helpless in every corner of the land. In these dark times what was the restraining influence of the true church? Amid all the piety and terror when oppression was the rule, there was the added terror of invasion. Shortly after the consecration at Pendell, the

warlike Danes came and almost destroyed its sanctuary. The abbot was slain on its altar steps, and monks lay bleeding and dead in and around the building. The Danes returned once more to renew their acts of spoliation and sacrilege. They again plundered this church, slaughtered its cowed monks, and robbed and burned their monastery; and Danish and Saxon priests long continued in fierce and bloody struggles for secular and ecclesiastical possession; and when, after many years of brutal strife, the great Saxon revenge was taken on St. Brice's day, Danes lay murdered around the altar of this very church, in which they had sought refuge.

Then there was another invasion; the Norman came, and Norman prelates, backed by victorious hordes, deprived Saxon bishops of their power; and heedless of a common faith, or of clerical rights, they assumed jurisdiction over the spiritual and temporal resources of each diocese. The monastery, which had been restored, and which once stood near this old church, was then occupied by Benedictine monks who claimed to be exempt from canonical obedience to the foreign ordinary; and who resisted the prelatical authority of the rapacious Norman. But the priestly invader knew his power, and would not yield his spiritual plunder. Appeals to Rome were completely ineffectual, and after much fierce contention between bishop and monk, the abbot was rudely deposed by the stranger. But the monks had their own revenge. The Norman prelate was slain at midnight at the entrance of the sanctuary, and his body long lay, among others of the consecrated dead, in one of the many stone coffins, the lids of which could be seen level with the tiled floor of Pendell church.

Here came Peter the hermit on his rounds, and here his voice was heard invoking aid for the Crusaders, denouncing the Saracens, and praying for the delivery of Jerusalem; and here within this church, many a candidate for knighthood kept his lonely midnight vigil over the armor that was to protect him, as one of the soldiers of the Cross, in distant Palestine. Alas! how many of these deluded

champions left their bones to bleach and crumble upon the arid plains of Judea! There were other scenes; here too, time after time, the faithful were amazed by wondrous miracles performed by some noted Dunstan; and by way of change, monks performed scriptural plays, and lashed the representative of Judas around the altar, to the great delight of credulous and edified spectators. Here, again, when one of Wickliffe's wandering disciples recklessly dared to broach his heresy, there was a furious commotion. The indignant priests clamored against the outrage on the ancient Faith; the common doom of early innovators followed, and the fanatical Lollard lost his life.

After those days there were troublous times. One of the detestable usurpers whose reign, like that of others in Britain, was but a pestilence, fancied himself almost free to govern England without even being subject to the usual dictation of the overshadowing power of Rome. But pontifical thunder was quickly heard. Pope Innocent issued his interdict, and for six dreary years the enduring subjects of king John were deprived of almost every religious rite. While the English despot defied and feasted, and while priests had a long holiday, the poor, suffering people alone felt the punishment. No church bell tolled, no mass was heard, no altar, or cross, or sacred image could be seen, no man might shave his beard or salute his neighbor; the dead were refused consecrated ground, and were tumbled, without a prayer, into ditches, hidden in fields, or covered up along the highways. Every place of worship in the kingdom was closed, and nothing in human shape could be found in Pendell church, except the dead monks that were stretched in rows down in its gloomy vaults.

But who, in those days, could withstand the anger of the Roman pontiff? The craven king became submissive, resigned his kingdom, and acknowledged himself the vassal of the Holy See. Nothing less would satisfy God's viceregent. For such considerations the Church could always relent, and receive back into its bosom the most

desperate transgressor. Yet, though the Church was in plenitude of its power, there was alarming wickedness in the land. The nation seemed debauched, and for years the moral laxity of priest and layman was almost overlooked in the prevailing depravity of the times; even the Church itself became infected, and, for about forty years, rival pontiffs denounced and anathematized one another, either from Rome or from Rimini, from Arragon or from Avignon. However, after a long period of destruction, Religion found a special remedy for the increased transgressions of the times. There was a mountain of iniquity to be removed, for which it seems the ordinary means at the disposal of the church were considered insufficient; a more effective spiritual aid was required, and Tetzel was sent forth to proclaim the potency of indulgences, and to offer pardon and purity by the simple purchase of these restoratives. The man who swore, or the man who stole, he who robbed, or he who cut a throat, knew the exact price which could free him from the taint of guilt; and the sale of these indulgences was announced also from the altar at Pendell.*

Then, during the progress of the Reformation what changes took place. There was great commotion in the land; there were fierce discussions, and nowhere was Luther more heartily execrated than here. Soon after, there were religious riots and bloodshed, and in the hurly burly which followed, priests and monks had to flee from this place; and pliant pastors took possession, though scenes of the wildest strife were still witnessed in the house of the Lord. Much damage was done to the building; the altar was pulled down, images were defaced, and relics scattered about; and when the voluptuous Defender of the Faith had full sway, many of those who could not acknowledge his spiritual supremacy, and many who believed with Luther, or who believed in the Pope, were by the merest

* For ninety livres, or about half a guinea, English money, a pardon could be purchased for the murder of a father, a mother, or a wife.

whim of a pious tyrant, made amenable to the "Bloody Statute," and orthodox and heterodox alike, were often led together to the stake or halter, almost under the shadow of this Christian temple.

During these eventful times, the greatest crime of which a man could be guilty, or at least that which was most certain to ensure the penalty of death, was his belief or disbelief in certain religious doctrines. In one reign a man must abjure the Pope and the Real Presence, in the next he must believe in the Mass and in transubstantiation, and the facility with which prelates, priests, and people altered their opinions on such subjects to suit a fanatical sovereign, was evidence sufficient to lead to the conclusion that had a doltish monarch proclaimed his faith in Mahomet, five-sixths of his servile subjects would have trampled on the cross and kissed the crescent. Cranmer, the archbishop, was noted for his instability, and for his ready adoption of extreme doctrinal points; but the reasoning few who dared to have a creed of their own, were certain to be doomed—even recantation could not always save. The religious teachers of the period, Romish or Protestant, knew no pity. Intolerance was triumphant; the taint of heresy was the very shadow of death.

However, when another change in the national faith had been effected; when, after many struggles and reverses, the new church, with its royal head, its zealous bishops, its sequestered estates, its princely income, and its assured tithes, had been established; when the possession of rich cathedrals and churches, and other Popish forfeitures, had been secured; when Popish prayers and Popish liturgies had been sufficiently diluted; and when these, with a simplified ritual, were considered adequate to secure for all—at least for the pastors—a ready passport to Paradise, still many pious believers were restless; greater purity and simplicity in faith and worship they thought should yet be attained, and when texts could not convince, the torch and the sword, as of old, were the aids often most relied on to propagate new doctrines when other modes of persua-

sion had failed. At this time some differences of opinion which had existed among priests, monks, and friars of the Roman church were almost forgotten; the deluge of schism appalled the stoutest champions of the older creed, and, while taking refuge in the Pontifical ark, they watched the rising waters, until the mighty turbid flood burst its bounds, and in torrents, rushed off madly in every direction, and almost every way-mark of the "Mother Church" was swept away, and there appeared to them but one scene of wildness and moral desolation.

Soon after a horde of sects had sprung up, each claiming to be the exponent of Truth; and each ready to persecute the other. The Roman church had been despotic—the Reformed church could scarcely tolerate. Luther threatened persecution; Calvin did persecute. A Protestant parliament persecuted Catholics; and priests and Jesuits had to flee for their lives, and public rewards were offered for their discovery. Prelacy was attacked by Presbyterians, and Presbyterians by Independents; and Cromwell's Roundheads rushed through the land praying and slaying; and here at Pendell they cut down many enemies of the Lord. They also tore down every remaining relic of Popery and Episcopacy, and, while wiping their blood stained swords, they shouted hosannas and sung psalms in this old sanctuary.

But these wild times have passed. After Cromwell's body had been dug up and dishonored by a pious king, the Church by law established, calmly prospered under the smile of royal favor; and if it has had to deal occasionally in a summary manner with recusants, and dissenting teachers, it must no doubt have been out of the purest motives for the extension of the true faith. The Church has had a long era of prosperity; it has been singularly blest, that is if vast wealth is emblematic of blessedness—and if its learned bishops have not all been endowed with spiritual gifts, they have, one and all, secured those temporal favors which enable them to be more devoted to their high calling; proving to scoffers that godliness is

great gain, and that the feet of those who bring glad tidings are ever "beautiful upon the mountains"

Grey old structure! still firm upon the earth, thou art little changed by years—yet what changes have taken place around thee! What great and what sad events have happened here; and what great ceremonies, great excommunications, great marriages, and great funerals! What shall future changes bring? Shall there be a gradual relapse to Brahma, or an advance to Reason? Thy tattered priests and monks have passed away; even their very bones have not been left thee. No vesper bell is longer heard at eve, no mass or litany is sung, but strange voices and strange anthems tell of the strange creed that has almost wrought ruin to thy founders. There is an air of sadness in thy presence; yet many still hope to restore thy lighted altar, and to crown thee with thy ancient cross. These hopes may be realized, for who can tell what an ardent faith may yet accomplish?

The Pendell valley is still attractive, and, in the genial summer season, visitors and antiquaries loiter around the place, and gaze with wonder at the many huge standing stones, and at the curious mounds and barrows still to be found in the vicinity. The church, sturdy in its old age, is still the principal object in the rural picture, and even but a short time back, few ever came or went without calling at the cottage of old Sarah Afton, known to some as the Seeress; she, past her eightieth year, could relate many a weird tale of the olden time. Her great-grandfather was one of the Pendell martyrs. She could show the places where bloody deeds were done, and point to the very spot where some humble devotee, Catholic or Protestant, had died for the truth. And then she could tell startling stories of those dread times; she could also tell of how shouts, and loud cries, and shrieks of terror of ghostly combatants could be heard around the church on dark and stormy nights, when the waves lashed the rocks in Pendell bay; and how, on other nights, lights could be often seen, and voices heard in the same building; and it

was a certain fact that one or two of her nearest neighbors, coming home about midnight, heard the cocks crow, and saw a long procession of monks moving out from the church, and then march with solemn tread around the graves. And, again, she would tell of how her own sister's grandson had seen, in the bright moonlight, an ancient Druid priest up in the great oak tree near the church yard gate, and, that, with his "own two eyes," he saw him cut, with a golden knife, a mistletoe from one of the highest branches. Old Sarah Afton believes these things the more readily because of what she had seen and heard herself; and then she would lower her voice and tell how, on many and many a night, and often on nights the most tempestuous, when no living mortal was inside the old building, she had heard the church organ, now in plaintive strains, and then in wild, rushing sounds, as if to drown the thunder then heard in the stormy sky.

But now 'tis the close of day; the moon appears again peering cautiously over the summit of that distant hill. The trees are sprinkled with the silvery light; the outlines of the sanctuary are barely visible, but a halo settles upon its tower, and the shimmering ivy, like a shroud, is seen flowing down its dark sides. A luminous beam is stretching out over the sombre sea, and lone rays wander among the graves, and flicker upon the numerous white tombs. In the spreading gleam the two small tower windows shine out like flashing eyes; and the old church, almost hidden in the partial gloom, seems to crouch down among the dead, like some gluttoned monster seeking repose while surrounded by the whitened skulls and bones of its numerous victims.

CHAPTER III.

THE CURATE OF PENDELL.

IT is evening again, a summer Sabbath eve. The hills are crowned with the glory of the setting sun, and in the ruddy golden light the earth seems draped in its most resplendent attire; the day's farewell is as peaceful and attractive as the smile of a departing angel.

The Reverend David Meade, curate at Pendell, is seated in his arm chair on the lawn in front of the old parsonage. Though surrounded by the beautiful scenery of the favored valley, he seems strangely indifferent to its attractions, or they may have produced that reverie in which he indulges. Leaning his head upon his ivory-headed cane, he has been looking down for some minutes at that daisy close to his foot, and in his musing he has wandered back to youth, has been a child again at his mother's knee, has been again at school, at college, at his ordination; he again receives his appointment to a curacy, and, after his marriage and the varied scenes and trials of over forty years since that event, he finds himself, after the hasty retrospect, now, in the decline of life, still a curate—still only a poor curate at Pendell.

But why at all a churchman? Why in orders,—why a priest? Why, with all his doubts and speculations, should he be a curate? His father had been one before him, and he, like a son of Aaron, without any wish or effort on his part, had somehow drifted into the ministry—into a position which his mature judgment had told him was most

unsuitable; but after apostolic hands had been laid upon him, thinking it too late to recede, he, even contrary to his own inclination, had remained a servant of the Church, and had ever since been trying to teach or explain to others that which he sometimes felt he did not clearly understand himself. Still, at times he tried to feel assured. Had he not encouragement to submissive belief in the example of learned prelates and of other distinguished men? He strove to think that the theological opinions which they had upheld might not be so extravagant as he sometimes fancied. Any way, setting aside the mysticism of a creed, he often satisfied himself by thinking that there was a base of morality in revelation from which he could draw supplies to benefit his hearers; leaving the many perplexities of belief to semi-inspired D. D.s, and imaginative commentators. He had little difficulty, however, with his parishioners at Pendell; nearly all there, simple and gentle, were believers; hardly one among them ever harbored a doubt, or ventured a speculation as to the validity of any doctrine; they, like most others, simply believed that which they had been trained to believe from infancy; and they were, therefore, just as steadfast in the conviction that the Pope was anti-Christ, as their Catholic forefathers had been that he was the august head of the true Church.

The Reverend David Meade had been curate of Pendell for over thirty years. He was now, fortunately for himself, under a rector who, having the benefit of a large income arising, somehow, from other spiritual sources, as well as from the cure of souls at Pendell, spent much of his time either in London or Paris, or on a periodical tour to certain continental cities. Perhaps these visits might have been made by the Reverend Rector for the acquisition of greater religious knowledge, or in order to witness the various developments of faith in different countries, so as to be able, if possible, to understand why that which was called "Apostolic Truth," and which had obtained government patronage at St. Paul's in Old England, should

be denounced as rank error, and anathematized as heresy at St. Peter's in Old Rome. And then in the semi-annual visit which he made to Pendell, he could enlighten his curate in this important particular; and though rather indifferent as to what latitude might be taken in scriptural interpretation, he could see that the thirty-nine articles of the English Church, had been, at least, outwardly respected. The Reverend George Morton, as rector, was faithful in what he considered the performance of his parochial duties; his semi-annual visits were regularly paid, he seemed anxious to know how many, young or old, were prepared for the important rite of confirmation, was particular to get correct lists of marriages, baptisms, and burials, for which a fee had been given, and was rather strict as to the collection of tithes and church rates; and for these onerous duties at Pendell, or rather for these toilsome semi-annual visits, his spiritual income was over £800 sterling. But all this was not clear gain; from this amount the salary of his curate had to be deducted, and he fancied himself truly generous by consenting to increase the stipend of Mr. Meade, his journeyman parson, to £60 a year.

For a period of about fifteen years under a former rich rector, who had, it was said, "gone to his great reward," Mr. Meade, as curate, had received the annual allowance of but fifty pounds, and being simple as a child in money matters, he really thought at the time, that the additional ten pounds, with free use of the old parsonage, was almost a sudden rise to affluence. He therefore gladly consented to remain as sub-pastor and spiritual overseer of the Christian flock at Pendell, and to perform his old round of duties—to preach twice on Sundays, to visit, to catechise, to marry, to baptize, to attend funerals, and to do all the clerical drudgery of the parish; and after having signed the agreement with his new spiritual superior, he hurried home to impart the joyful information to his family; and then went to receive the congratulations of his many poor friends.

About three years after his last appointment, Mr. Meade lost his faithful wife; this affliction at his age became the darkest cloud over his remaining hopes of earthly happiness, but a daughter was left him—a flower of purity and goodness—who strove to make his declining years as happy as possible. He had also a son in India. This young man, Charles Meade, who was about two years older than his sister, had been rated one of the most promising young fellows in the country, and being of an adventurous disposition, he determined, after he had left college, to see the world for himself, and try to assist his father. Had he submitted to ordination as his father had done, he could have remained in England, and might have had a curacy, and perhaps even forty pounds a year to begin with, but having the greatest aversion to the priestly trade, he refused to eke out a living by dealing in mysteries, or by assuming clerical pretensions. He might have had sufficient influence to obtain a position in the army, but he looked upon the profession of arms as barbarism, and upon so-called military glory as degrading to humanity; a situation, however, offered in a wealthy mercantile firm, and with strong hopes of success he sailed for India.

During nearly all his married life, the Reverend David Meade had to struggle with difficulties, and while it pinched him sorely to spare sufficient to pay for the education of his children, by great self-denial he even managed to secure for them accomplishments which few but the wealthy could obtain. These efforts and sacrifices on the part of himself and his wife now brought some return. His household was small, being comprised of himself, his daughter, and one old servant. Miss Esther Meade was chief controller of domestic affairs, and by her economy and wonderful management, the humble stipend of her father was made to produce home comforts not exceeded in many more pretentious establishments. She was also able to spare sufficient time to give lessons in music, French, and drawing, to the children of certain families in the parish, thereby adding to her father's little income an

amount which not only enabled her to supply several needs—even at times luxuries—for her father and herself, but also to aid many of the poor and destitute of her own neighborhood.

What a pity that poverty and human wretchedness should so often be found amid the attractive beauties of nature, making even the sunlight almost gloomy to many! What a pity that the human eye should ever give a dew drop to the flower, or that the sigh from a sad heart should waft the odor from the rose! What a pity that the view of the rich scenery of the pleasant Pendell valley should be looked at with indifference, because gaunt hunger stands like a spectre in the way. Alas! that sad spectre is too often seen, even in the glowing summer time, as if impatiently waiting for its own black season, dreary Winter, in order to take possession of many an humble dwelling.

The curate, after his Sabbath toil, was thinking of these things, and he remembered the many uncomplaining poor he had seen that day in his visits. But why, thought he, should there be poverty? why so much distress? Why, in this land of wealth and greatness, should there be one solitary instance of suffering for lack of food? The birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, have their abundance; the mountain goat finds its herbage even mid rocks and wastes; flocks luxuriate in rich valleys, and the cattle on a thousand hills grow fat. Why is it that man alone, more than any other of God's creatures, should be compelled to feel the pangs of hunger? What a shame that humanity should be thus degraded! The world contains ample stores for all; kind nature, willing to be impartial, is lavish in her dealings, and yields her gifts in rich profusion; but the fair and equitable distribution which she intended is interfered with by too many of the selfish and rapacious, and unheeded by too many of the wealthy in power. This is a violation of natural rights; for where all the children of the earth are equal inheritors, unequal distribution of the patrimony is injustice. A few, by force or by fraud, or by little or no industry, have amassed wealth, and possess

a superabundance of every comfort; the many have mostly to exist by severe toil, and suffer great deprivation. A few monopolize the ownership of the very land, keeping large tracts unproductive; while a vast number of persons can show no claim—unless it be that for interment—to a single foot of the soil of their native country. This is a palpable outrage on natural rights. British law, like the laws of almost every other Christian land, still defends this monopoly, and offers, as yet, no true remedy, no just restoration, for the evictions and usurpations of past days, as if time had already legalized ancient acts of robbery and spoliation; and while Religion stands by and smiles with satisfaction at the present social arrangement, the national Church, supported by plunder, will make no effort at reform in this particular, but contented with its earthly honors and emoluments, it assumes a proud humility, and bids its destitute adherents be submissive to the decrees of Providence, and to the powers that be; and then, by its own course, it glaringly exhibits a sad example of partiality and injustice in the treatment of its own clergy. The truly faithful pastors whose duties are the most arduous, receive as the reward of their labor scarcely sufficient for their humble support, while drones, called “church dignitaries,” are glutted with favors, and live in luxury.

These views strongly impressed the curate at the time; he had long felt that religion had become the trade of many unscrupulous men, who, when clothed in its garb, and uttering its prayer, had acted as if their profession—called sacred—had authorized them to ignore every principle of right. He knew that clerical arrogance and assumption, Pagan and Mohammedan, as well as Christian, had circumscribed progress and stifled many of the most generous impulses, and at the moment his memory retraced many instances of their folly.

When Manetho, the Egyptian priest and historian, was unable to believe that man alone could possibly have erected the vast pyramids, obelisks, colossal statues, and temples of the Nile, he insisted in his writings that these

amazing structures had been erected by a dynasty of gods who had been the original rulers of Egypt for about twenty-five thousand years, before human beings had become their successors.

When the Caliph Al Mamun, the cotemporary of Charlemagne, received, with distinction, at his Court at Bagdad, foreign astronomers and learned men, he encountered much opposition from the Mohammedan priests, who did not wish that faithful Moslems should ever seek for science or wisdom beyond that contained in the Koran.

When Omar, surnamed El Aalem, or the learned, wrote a geological work on the retreat of the sea, the same priests declared that his system was contradictory to certain passages in the inspired Koran; he was, therefore, called upon to make a public recantation of his supposed error, and to avoid persecution, he left Samarakand.

After Copernicus had written his great work, *De Revolutionibus Orbium Cælestium*, proving the sun to be the centre of our system, so opposed were the priests of his time to new opinions, that he hid his manuscript for over twelve years, lest its publication should insure an anathema.

Learned Jesuit fathers of the Christian Church, so intimidated Galileo by threats and imprisonment, that he made a degrading abjuration of what he had written in favor of the Copernican system; his works were then said to be in opposition to the express word of God, and his "Dialogues" were burnt at Rome. Yet though seven cardinals signed the sentence of the Inquisition against Galileo, and though even Luther joined in the outcry against the correct theory of planetary revolution, still that theory is now accepted by science, and the name of Galileo is honored by all!

As soon as Buffon had published his "Natural History," which included his "Theory of the Earth," he was officially informed by the Faculty of Theology in Paris, that several of his propositions "were reprehensible and contrary to the creed of the Church;" and Buffon, too, was compelled

to humbly declare, that he had no intention to contradict scripture, and that he would abandon everything he had written which might be considered contrary to the law of Moses.

Newton's theory of gravitation was at first strongly opposed; he was accused of skepticism, and certain of the pious, who declaimed against human learning, maintained that "the Hebrew Scriptures, when rightly translated, comprised a perfect system of natural philosophy."

Priests had also assumed to dictate to science, and had, time after time, foolishly protested against the opinions and discoveries of enlightened investigating and ingenious men. Discovery and invention seem to have been too often looked upon by the Church as twin children of the Evil One.*

Geographical, as well as astronomical and geological knowledge or discovery, was promptly opposed or discredited whenever it came in conflict with the crude clerical notions of the age.†

When the enlightened Bavarian Bishop Virgil, before the ninth century, asserted the existence of the Antipodes, Pope Zachary, who was scandalized at the idea, sent orders to his legate, "to strip him of his priesthood, and drive him from the Church and altars of God."

Roger Bacon, the ingenious Franciscan Friar, who was:

* Ecclesiastical architecture, statuary or painting—any effort which could add to the material splendor of the Church—might be indulged; but were a vigorous inventive mind inclined to go much further, suspicion was easily aroused, and the spectre of a Dominican pointing to the Inquisition, too often restrained the aspirations of genius. Darwin says: "During the same period, the Holy Inquisition selected, with extreme care, the freest and boldest men in order to burn and imprison them. In Spain alone, some of the best men, those who doubted and questioned—and without doubting and questioning there can be no progress—were eliminated during three centuries at the rate of a thousand a year." (*Descent of Man* Vol. 1, p. 171.)

† A curious clerical theory, as to the causes of the revolution of the earth, is that given by the Rev. Father Hardouin. He believed that the rotation of the earth was caused by lost souls trying to escape from the central fire of our globe; that by their climbing on the inner crust of the earth, which he asserted was the wall of hell, the world was made to revolve, as a squirrel, by climbing, turns a cage.

called by his admirers the "Doctor Mirabilis;" who dared to reprove the immoral monks and clergy of his time; who ventured to explore the secrets of nature; who was an astronomer, and who, it is said, invented spectacles, and made useful suggestions respecting the telescope and the microscope, and who made many valuable scientific discoveries; this worthy man was harrassed by clerical ignorance and jealousy; he was accused of being in league with the devil, of having sold himself to satan; his discoveries were pronounced to be the result of "hellish magic;" his great work, the *Opus Majus*, was condemned, and, by order of Pope Nicholas III., he was forbidden to teach. After useless appeals, he was thrust into prison in his old age, and was greatly worn and enfeebled by an incarceration of ten years. Soon after, when on his death-bed, he uttered these melancholy words: "I repent, now, that I have given myself so much trouble for the love of science. It is on account of the ignorance of those with whom I have to deal, that I have not been able to accomplish more."

The establishment of the Royal Society of England, was opposed because it was feared that discoveries in experimental philosophy "might be subversive of the Christian faith;" the telescope and the microscope were called "Atheistical inventions."

Dr. Jenner was denounced for his discovery of vaccination, and the pulpit proclaimed the operation as "diabolical—a tempting of God's providence, and therefore a heinous crime." Harvey's discovery of the circulation of blood was scoffed at by priests, and even by many physicians, for many years.

Dr. Franklin was charged with sacrilege for his temerity with lightning, and lightning-rods were condemned as "threatening the will of an angry God." * Men who first proposed to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, were

* Almost every church at the present day has its lightning-rod; ministers now seem to think that it is perhaps more efficacious than pray-er for the preservation of the "house of God."

told "to fear the vengeance of Heaven, for attempting to improve that which the Creator, in his almighty will and Providence, has ordained from the creation of the world." Russian priests considered the project of Peter the Great, to cut a canal between the Volga and the Don, as "great impiety."

The proposal to make a certain river in Portugal navigable to the Tagus, was forbidden, because the Portuguese clergy asserted that, if it had been the will of God that the river should be navigable, he would have made it so; and when Brindley, the great engineer, appeared before a parliamentary committee in England, to urge a petition favoring the construction of canals, he was asked by one of the pious members: "Pray, sir, what do you suppose God made rivers for?" and though he calmly replied: "To feed canals," yet the petition was rejected because the Church at that day did not encourage such projects; even printing was looked upon as a hostile discovery.

How strange that clerical obstinacy should have retarded the progress of astronomy, geology, philosophy, and of almost every other moral and physical science; it is well known that the self-sufficiency of a majority of the most influential ministers has been a hinderance to social and political advancement; even in petty matters their interference has been most absurd. Not many years ago, persons who attempted to winnow corn by mechanical means were refused communion, while others were reproved for using forks instead of fingers in the use of food; and in our own day "life assurance" has been neglected by many because it "argues a distrust in Providence."

A distinguished writer, reflecting on clerical arrogance and dictation in relation to scientific matters, says:

"Who shall number the patient and earnest seekers after truth, from the days of Galileo until now, whose lives have been embittered and their good name blasted by the mistaken zeal of bibliolaters? Who shall count the hosts of weaker men, whose sense of truth has been destroyed in the effort to harmonize impossibilities—whose

life has been wasted in the attempt to force the generous new wine of science into the old bottles of Judaism, compelled by the outcry of the same strong party? It is true, that if philosophers have suffered, their cause has been amply avenged. Extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every science as the strangled snake beside that of Hercules; and history records that, whenever science and orthodoxy have been fairly opposed, the latter has been forced to retire from the lists, bleeding and crushed, if not annihilated—scotched, if not slain. But orthodoxy is the Bourbon of the world of thought. It learns not, neither can it forget; and though at present bewildered and afraid to move, it is as willing as ever to insist that the first chapter of Genesis contains the beginning and the end of sound science, and to visit with such petty thunderbolts, as its half paralyzed hands can hurl, those who refuse to degrade nature to the level of primitive Judaism." (Huxley, Lay Sermons, p. 278.)

And another—

"For more than three centuries the decadence of theological influence has been one of the most invariable signs and measures of our progress. In medicine, physical science, commercial interests, politics, and even ethics, the reformer has been confronted with theological affirmations that have barred his way, which were all defended as of vital importance, and were all compelled to yield before the secularizing influence of civilization." (Lecky, History of Morals, Vol. 2, p. 18.)

Such instances of interference the curate knew had been recorded as facts against pastors of the Christian Church; and he also knew that, under the influence of religion and nationality, influences which very many still deem most sacred, the most terrible woes had fallen upon the human family. What sufferings, he thought, have been endured by mankind because of their adhesion to those cherished ideas! What enormities have followed the so-called propagation of the new faith! Christianity claims to be a religion of peace, yet, what bitter discus-

sion, what fierce strife, and what sanguinary contests have followed its footsteps. The early enemies of our faith had marked the progress of the Church from an humble beginning, to wealth and power, culminating in tyranny and persecution. It had scarcely escaped from the bloody rule of a Nero or a Diocletian ere it rushed out from its gloomy hiding place in the Catacombs, greedy itself for blood; and history has borne sad evidence of the atrocities of its adherents. The Christian Church had barely emerged from its cloud of obscurity, and gained recognition by the government of the period, ere it snatched the sword and persecuted its pagan predecessors; and then there followed contention and disunion among its own upholders. It encouraged the wild crusades; it established the Inquisition in Spain, and had its Star Chamber in England. It gave a medal in commemoration of the massacre of St. Bartholomew; and conferred rank upon those who slaughtered Papists in Ireland. In Rome it was a fury, in England a despot, in almost every nation under its sway, a fierce, vindictive tyrant. It has ever claimed to be the spirit of order, progress and intelligence, yet strange to learn, the long period—the centuries of its most unlimited control—a period of moral and intellectual degeneracy—is known to all as the “dark ages.” Before, as well as after the Reformation, the Church was implacable against unlimited freedom of thought, and even now, in more enlightened times, should Reason offer the most humble suggestion, contradictory to the mysteries of Faith, a host of its ordained exponents will consign Reason to infamy; as if truth in any form could be eclipsed by doubt, or overcome by argument. Why should this be? Why is it that creeds tend to make priests arrogant, and men servile; and why should ideas of intolerance and persecution relate almost solely to religious or speculative belief? The Church assumes to teach humility, yet it is ever eager for power; it denounces worldliness, though insatiable for wealth; it preaches peace, while being, perhaps, the active and principal cause of the most desperate wars—its inconsistencies

are innumerable. This was the curate's train of thought at the time, and though he had often had his own peculiar doubts, and fancied he had discovered many discrepancies in word and in doctrine, yet he would try to reconcile all; he would even plead with himself for the Church. In his darkest hours he had often been solaced by the teachings of immortality and future bliss. There might be errors in its doctrine, discrepancies in its scriptures, and useless formality in its ritual; but after all there was something ennobling in its example; something sterling in its precepts; something tender and beautiful in its solemn prayers and liturgies; and something estatic and divine in its promises of reward. It had been the gate of Heaven to many a poor humble soul who had found the world unkind, and to a host of the simple and unlearned it had smoothed the passage to the grave.

But then, again, thought he in his wavering, why have so many of the educated and intelligent grown so indifferent to religion? Why is skepticism on the increase, boldly challenging discussion? Alas! the curate felt that he himself had too often wavered in his faith, that his belief was uncertain, that he had passed years in irresolution, regretting that he had ever entered the Church as a pastor, and that he had often and often wished and prayed for a means of living more in accord with his own ideas of usefulness. He looked back upon those years as a bleak period of doubt and perplexity, and he fancied that had he been placed in a different position he might have had a larger field for liberty of thought and action; but like Prometheus he had been chained to a rock—he had been bound to a creed, and dared not openly speculate beyond it.

As he thus sat thinking, there was an expression of sadness upon his intellectual face, and his mild grey eye still rested upon the green sward. He looked up, the sunlight had departed, and the solemn gloom of night was soon to rest upon the old church tower; he felt that the evening of his own life would soon draw to a close. And now came

the great regret, that for want of determination, for the want of that true courage which the genuine in nobility and heroism alone possess, his efforts in the cause of progress had been sadly circumscribed. Though still in comparative health and vigor, the grey hairs of age had come, and he soon might have its palsied hand and its faltering step; it was too late now to enter upon a different mission—he must leave his task unfinished. He thought of this with regret—with remorse. And brooding alone over this in the deepening shadows, there he still sat, sighing at seventy, sadly sighing that the summer of his life had been wasted away.

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CHAPTER IV.

ESTHER MEADE.

SHE was looking at the ocean in its grandeur, at the summer sea, at another dawn upon the great waste of waters. How glorious in its immensity! There it lay, the mysterious deep—a picture of the illimitable—in its most complacent mood, gently heaving beneath the timid light of the early day, while flashes of purple and gold glanced far and near over its broad azure bosom. As yet the outlines of the distant coast were barely visible; the dim grey mountain afar seemed to rise up like a lone pyramid in the great desert; the island, still beyond, rested like some æriel creation upon the slumbering waves, and then, soon as the sun's broad shafts, like spirits of the light, shot broadly upwards, the mariner's beacon flame faded away with the stars, and the huge ships away, away out upon the quiet sea, appeared to be flecks of drifting foam upon the blushing ocean.

She was looking with placid enjoyment at this fresh display of natural beauty and sublimity; she could witness with eagerness the tumult of a tempest, but the glorious scene before her was one which was sure to lead Esther Meade into a state of calm religious contemplation. She felt that the attractive and harmonious blending of earth, ocean, and sky, as then seen, was produced for man's special observation and instruction; that the eye was made to convey impressions of these superb objects to the mind, and that while he must necessarily acknowledge evidence

of design in their creation, his heart must beat in gratitude to the great designer—the giver of all good.

Such was the bent of her thoughts as she stood leaning against one of the great rocks that studded the pebbly shore of Pendell bay. Esther Meade was a picture of health, and of womanly grace and dignity, and every look and gesture indicated self-reliance and resolution. She was of medium height, and her figure was almost perfect. Her face, though not very handsome, was one that a painter would like to study. It had a rare expression of calmness and determination; her eyes were blue and soft, but penetrating; they seemed to catch one's thoughts at a glance; and her dark brown hair was now almost hidden under the ample straw hat which she wore in her rambles and excursions. Though quite indifferent to the modes and almost endless changes of modern millinery, her dress was always most becoming, and without affecting contempt for expensive fashion, her own neat and peculiar style had imitators among many who were prone to indulge in the lace and silken mysteries of the boudoir.

Esther Meade delighted to be out with the dawn. In the mild Summer time she would often recline for over an hour at a time upon some jutting rock that was covered with sea weed, and watch the rising sun, or wait until some distant sail had disappeared from view. She was accustomed to the sea in all its moods. She could row a boat or manage a sail; she could fish or swim, (as every woman should be able to do); she knew the whole channel into the bay as well as a pilot; and she knew every dangerous rock, and every wave-worn cave for some miles along the coast, and oftentimes, even in rather rough weather, she would sail or row out alone to the distant light-house, and if the day was calm, she would stay floating about for hours among the dangerous rocks surrounding that structure, peering down, as some hovering sea bird would, into the blue depths, as if looking after some stray anchor of the Armada, or watching some shining object below; or eager to find some relic of a storm, or

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trace the scattered spoil of a wreck. It was her delight to be away on these excursions; she knew no fear, and she would venture out in the wildest storm did necessity require it. Her father often told her that she was too daring, but, knowing her coolness and dexterity, he seldom felt uneasy at her absence. She had been trained to this rough and healthy exercise by her brother, and since his departure she seemed more inclined to take such recreation; it no doubt reminded her of the many happy hours they had thus spent together. She felt his absence sorely; she had now no companion in her wild excursions; most of her female friends thought her too reckless, scarcely one of them would venture to join in her hazardous expeditions, and none of the farmers' sons in the parish would presume to make advances to the curate's daughter, and the sons of such of the gentry as chose to reside near Pendell generally sought fashion in London, or in other cities, often spending lavishly what their fathers, in their latter years, had tried to save.

In the Summer months a titled family or two might make a short stay at Pendell; ordinary visitors came and went, but none came who could in any measure supply the place of her brother. There was one particular visitor, however, who professed to greatly enjoy such recreation as she was in the habit of taking, and who seemed willing to spend half of his time out in the Bay; this was the Rev. George Morton, the rector. He, no doubt, wished to make his parochial visits to Pendell periods of special relaxation; during such times, he strove to pay the most distinguished attention to Miss Meade, and he often proposed to accompany her in a ramble along the shore, or on a boating excursion; she evidently stood very high in his estimation, and he was anxious to have her understand his appreciation. She, however, seemed indifferent as to whether the rector considered her clever, or amiable, or otherwise; she, somehow, never felt inclined to take a walk, or enter a boat during his stay; and as she did not consider herself particularly favored either by his prefer-

ence or pressing requests, she always had a ready excuse to remain at home. Still, on her father's account, knowing his dependent position on the mere whim of his superior—or rather of his employer—she endeavored to make herself as agreeable as possible, and to keep Mr. Morton from fancying himself at all slighted. Sometimes the rector was accompanied by his wife, he appeared anxious that she and Miss Meade should become very intimate, but Mrs. Morton felt her position, she was too straight-laced and dignified in her manner with the curate's daughter, and the formal invitation which she had given Esther to visit the distant, stylish rectory, had never yet been formally accepted.

So Miss Meade, fair and attractive as she was in her twenty-fourth year, could not boast of a lover, or of a choice companion; neither did she receive, except seldom, the polite attentions which gentlemen are generally glad to show to ladies of refinement and education. Had her father been a bishop, or a rich rector, many gallants might have fancied that her blushes had reddened their wine; but as he was only a poor curate, the shade of his penury paled the modest bloom that would have adorned a princess. Her comparatively secluded position had, however, given her more self-reliance, and as she cared neither for the frivolity of artificial friendship, nor for the glare of fashionable life, she only sought to make her father's home happy, and to do her duty within her own particular sphere. As a clergyman's daughter, she took great interest in the affairs of their rural church. In one sense she was in principle strongly "high church," that is, her father and her grandfather, and her great grandfather, having been duly ordained and declared successors in the apostolic order, and authorized to preach wholesome doctrine, and to administer the two Protestant sacraments according to the ceremonial of the Church of England, she inherited, or believed that she had a right to inherit, strong prejudices in favor of the Established Church. Her ideas of theology were educed more from the

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church catechism and the church prayer book, than from the Bible, and she therefore inferred that the Church of which that prayer book was the expositor, was, and must be, the sole pillar and ground of truth. No wonder, then, that she looked upon dissenters as rank and obstinate error-ists, and upon the chapels, or conventicles, as she preferred to call them, of Presbyterians, or of Methodists, or of other denominations, as places or dens where rank heresy was inculcated contrary to the ceremonies, doctrines and articles plainly set forth in the aforesaid Protestant manual; and, like a certain class of high church individuals, she could treat Popery with respect, while dissent was but worthiness of contempt. Still the actions of Esther Meade were not intolerant; it was only her opinions that were illiberal. How fortunate it would have been for mankind, had such virtuous inconsistency controlled the acts of the inhuman religious dogmatists of other days! In her frequent intercourse with humble families in the parish, as well as in the more distant parts, she never inquired as to their creed, with a view to regulate her sympathies; she tried to discover their wants, and then she made efforts to benefit all without distinction. The preachers or teachers of dissent were in reality the only ones against whom she ever hurled a reproach, and although she had an instinctive dread of Infidelity, yet she tried to think it more consistent and less injurious to the uneducated and humbler classes, than the crude schism propagated by dogmatic or blatant reverends of the Knox or Wesley schools. The Established Church was therefore to her the real true Church for England; it was the spiritual successor of its ancient Roman mother, a church which she venerated for its antiquity, but denounced because of its oppression. The English Church was freed from the useless ostentatious ceremonies of Romanism, it was purged from the pagan and superstitious rites which had adhered to the ancient faith, and it shone forth in happy England as the authorized exponent of Christian truth. She often wondered why these characteristics were not apparent to all,

and that all did not submit to its teachings. The Roman Church, she believed, had been once divinely ordained, but it had fallen from its glory, it had become proud and intolerant, and had forfeited its position of pre-eminence. It had persecuted, and this, she thought, was alone sufficient to insure its degradation. A Christian church, persecuting for opinion's sake, seemed monstrous; and she well knew that the great ecclesiastical Roman power had cared but very little for human life where its own intolerant aims required a human sacrifice.

Overlooking its many bitter contests for supremacy, she shuddered at its wanton prosecution of the wild attempts of the crusades in which whole nations had been involved. The Head of the Christian Church, Christian potentates, and Christian priests, had all urged the credulous and impressible multitudes to arm; and frantic hosts, with sword and torch, rushed forward to slay the hated possessor of the "Holy Land," in order to rescue what was supposed to be the sepulchre of Christ from pagan control; and though the Saracens had generally respected the religious idea of the Pilgrims who went to visit the sacred tomb, and had even allowed them to build a church; and though many believe that there is no fair evidence to prove that these enlightened unbelievers had ever desecrated the spot so sacred to Christians, yet, in later times, after a horde of barbarous Turks had taken possession of Jerusalem, when it was asserted that Christian pilgrims had been terribly abused, Christian nations became incensed, and believed that the Almighty required them to deal out signal vengeance, and in what followed, we see the "Christian at work."

Pope Urban II., greatly affected, it is said, by the recitals of Peter the Hermit, who had visited Jerusalem, addressed an immense multitude, and urged them to depart and rescue the holy sepulchre, and as soon as he had raised his hand to bless the armed host, and had pronounced the absolution of their sins, they rushed off in their terrible course of destruction.

So, onward marched a motly assemblage of undisciplined thousands, wearing a cross upon the shoulder, displaying the cross upon flaunting banners, and shouting the battle cry of "*Deus vult*," God wills it. The belief was then general, that the whole world was about to be destroyed, and that the great day of judgment was at hand. Every eclipse was the cause of intense alarm; business was almost entirely neglected; buildings were suffered to become ruins, and true believers seemed only anxious to propitiate heaven by attempting to rescue the holy sepulchre ere the final consummation of all things. Insane with this idea, the fanatical Crusaders dealt no mercy to those who opposed them; men, women and children, they remorselessly slaughtered; neither tender infancy nor hoary age was respected, and thousands of unfortunate Jews were wantonly murdered. In the first crusade, after a siege of five weeks, Jerusalem was taken by assault, and a distinguished writer * remarks: "Neither arms defended the valiant, nor submission the timorous. No age or sex was spared, infants on the breast were pierced by the same blow with their mothers who implored for mercy; even a multitude, to the number of 10,000 persons who had surrendered themselves prisoners, *and were promised quarter*, were butchered in cold blood by those ferocious conquerors." It is admitted that, throughout the entire period of these terrible struggles, the Christians were more brutal, and far less merciful, than the unbelievers whose country they had invaded; and though they had violated treaties with impunity, yet when the chivalrous infidel, Saladin, took Jerusalem, he spared all.

However, after these vast preparations, after the prayers of the Church, after seven different crusades occurring from time to time during a period of over 150 years, causing the destruction of over two millions of human beings; after such a waste of blood and treasure, and after such untold expense, a few temporary successes were the mea-

* Hume.

gre result; and the cowed, decimated crusaders returned, leaving the "Holy City" still in the possession of the unbeliever; and Palestine, even to the present day, rejects the cross, and is under the dominion of the crescent.

The main benefits which the world derived from the crusades, were an increase of commerce with the unbelieving nations of the East, and the extended influence of Grecian and Saracenic civilization and refinement among Christians; but the Christian Church was a peculiar gainer, inasmuch as it was further enriched by a fresh supply of human skulls and bones, and other saintly relics direct from the blest or cursed city of Jerusalem.*

Restless in its mighty power, the Church still aimed at universal domination; it was powerless for the time against Paganism, but there were others whom it could control. There were actually Christians at that time who disputed the doctrines and defied the arrogance of the Roman power. The Greek Church was a rival which could not safely be assailed, but there was heresy in the land, even within the limits of Pontifical authority, which must be crushed out to save the integrity of the so-called "Mother Church;" and the sword which had been used ineffectually when the Christian was at work against the Infidel in Palestine, was now to be turned against a Christian community in the south of France. The Albigenses were the unfortunate people against whom the head of the Church had directed his ire. In A. D. 1209 Pope Innocent III. proclaimed a crusade against these unoffending brethren—to him they were criminals because they had

* Alluding to the Crusaders, Guizot says: "They also found themselves in juxtaposition with two civilizations not only different from their own, but more advanced, the Greeks on the one hand, and the Mohammedans on the other. It is curious to observe in the old chronicles, the impression which the Crusaders made upon the Mussulmans. These latter regarded them first as barbarians; as the rudest, the most ferocious, and the most stupid class of men they had ever seen. The Crusaders, on their part, were struck with the riches and elegance of manners of the Mussulmans." (*Hist. Civilization*, Vol. 1, p. 154.)

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dared to regulate their own religious belief—and he urged Catholic princes and people to hasten forward in the holy war of extermination; and in his fierce exhortation to the king of France, used these words: "We exhort you that you would endeavor to destroy that wicked heresy of the Albigenses, and to do this with more vigor than you would toward the Saracens themselves; persecute them with a strong hand, deprive them of their lands and possessions, banish them and put Roman Catholics in their room." An army of nearly half a million of fierce zealots was soon assembled, each of whom was exempted from the jurisdiction of secular courts and tribunals for debt or for crime; the pardon of all sins, past and future, was promised by the Church, and a special indulgence was granted to every one who should become enrolled in the holy army. The crusaders against Pagans in Palestine wore a cross on the shoulder, and, as a distinguishing mark, the crusaders against Christians in France wore a cross on the breast, and were headed and commanded by Christian princes, legates, bishops, and noblemen. Count Raymond of Toulouse, then ruler of the territory inhabited by the Albigenses, though himself a Catholic, was quite averse to the persecution of his own people, and his interference in their behalf greatly offended the Pope, who was determined to extirpate the heresy. So when the great army moved forward the Count became greatly alarmed, and tried to conciliate his Holiness by consenting to act even against the Albigenses; and though the Pope affected to grant him a pardon, he merely wished to keep him submissive for the time, intending to punish him when opportunity offered. The Pope's duplicity is exposed in the following message which he addressed to his legate: "We counsel you, with the Apostle Paul, to employ guile with regard to this Count, for in this case it ought to be called prudence. We must attack separately those who are separated from unity; leave for a time the Count of Toulouse, employing towards him a wise dissimulation, that the other heretics may be the more easily defeated,

and that afterwards we may crush him when he shall be left alone." Such was the craft used by the Vicar of Christ; his fanatical army thirsted for blood, and terrible was the onslaught; even history almost hesitates to give the dark and sickening details of years of rapine, blood and slaughter.

Having taken the city of Beziers, which was at that time crowded with refugees—Catholics as well as heretics—the leaders of the impatient fanatics requested the Pope's legate, then present, to inform them, before the slaughter commenced, how they should distinguish Catholics from heretics, to which the legate sent this dreadful reply: "Tuez les Tous, Dieu connoit ceux qui sont a lui!"—Kill them all, God will know His own. This infamous command was strictly obeyed—not one was left alive—not a house was left standing, and in the sad night when Beziers was in blood and flames, over 60,000 human beings lay slaughtered within its blackened boundaries—a fearful evidence that the Christian had been at work.

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CHAPTER V.

"THE CHRISTIAN AT WORK."

THERE have been saints in all ages, and in all nations, Pagan as well as Christian. As boors without personal worth, or the least trace of natural nobility, can, even at the present day, be created temporal Lords, so the vilest of sinners, without a single ray of holiness, can still be baptized or elevated into saints. The Church has ever been ready to canonize its favorites, no matter what the world might think of them or of their absurd or almost miraculous transition from fiends to spirits of light. If Pope or Prince recognized their services, from either a spiritual, political, or peculiar point, it was easy to cancel sins, venial or mortal, to pronounce absolution, and, therefore, with the sacred sponge of authority, to wipe out every stain. High Priests of all creeds have, for a consideration, generally been willing to transform hideousness into beauty, and to change the sordid, brutal character of some obsequious tyrant into one of meekness and purity, deserving of a prominent position even in Paradise. It might not be easy to determine how much folly, how much virtue, or how much vice, would be sufficient to establish a claim for canonization, but it is well known that characters noted for great servility, for great humanity, or for great atrocities, have alike been elevated to the peerage of the celestial realm.

Now, without much seeking for illustrations as to why some have received such special spiritual distinction, we

all know that in Hindoostan the fanatic Brahmin who tore his flesh with iron hooks, or let his finger nails grow through the back of his hand, won the veneration of true believers, and was esteemed a saint; that the dervish, or Mohammedan monk, whose life was spent in prayer and penury, and who was ready to destroy an unbeliever to secure celestial glory, was likewise a saint; and we also know that Christian fakirs, like their originals in India, were canonized by the Church; one, because he had doled out a miserable existence, squatted and squalid, on the top of a high pillar, as did Symon the stylite; another, like St. Francis, because he had lived in a cave in rags and filth. One, because he could periodically lash and persecute himself; another, because he could systematically lash and persecute somebody else.

Then, besides these, there is a curious tribe known as National Saints, whose annual worship is generally a grand debauch, and whose reputed exploits are mostly as mythical as the origin of the saints themselves. St. George is venerated in England, probably because he is said to have killed a fiery dragon, and a multitude of ignorant Christians actually believe that, as a noted bare back rider, he performed that distinguished feat. St. Patrick is almost adored in Ireland, partly because it is believed that he banished snakes from the Emerald Isle, and partly because, by the convincing exhibition of a simple shamrock, he so impressed the minds of the Pagan Irish as to make them believe that there were three superior deities instead of one. And what St. Andrew did for Scotland, St. David for Wales, St. Dennis for France, Augustine for the Saxons, or Boniface for Germany, may be arrived at as correctly by a simple guess as by the perusal of any particular record in their behalf.

Among some of the latest worthies which the Roman Church has authoritatively added to the army of saints, we find the name of Peter D'Arbuss, who was Inquisitor General of Arragon in 1484, and an active persecutor of heretics. Ignatius Loyola, the gloomy fanatic and founder of the

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crafty, unscrupulous order of Jesuits, was canonized by Pope Gregory XV. in 1663; and, centuries before that, the savage St. Dominic, who advocated and secured the establishment of the "Holy Inquisition," and who, as some assert, was the first Inquisitor General of that infamous tribunal, was officially included among the blest by Pope Gregory IX in 1223. This very St. Dominic was he who instigated the Pope against the Albigenses, and who aided and encouraged the brutal Montfort in a further course of persecution.

After the slaughter at Beziers, Count Simon De Montfort, the beloved avenger of the Church, was now leader of the "Holy Army," and he followed up his atrocious proceedings in different places, some of which proceedings are thus recorded by Catholic authors: "He took several castles which resisted the Holy Church, and hanged of good right many of their inhabitants upon gibbets, which they had well merited."* Relative to another place, the historian says: "The besieged, wearied out with a long siege, having fled during the night, were stopped by our guards, who cut the throats of as many as they could find."† And of another place: "The Count Simon having taken the castle, caused the above named Aimeri, a notable nobleman, to be hanged upon a gibbet, also a small number of knights. The other nobles, with some who had mixed among them in the hope that the knights would be spared, to the number of about eighty, were put to the sword, and lastly, some three hundred heretics burnt in this world were thus given over by him to the eternal fire, and Guirande, the lady of the chateau, cast into a well, was there crushed down with stones."‡

After a series of butcheries during the first year of the crusade against the Albigenses, the "holy army," with its numerous reinforcements, commenced its second year's campaign by taking, with other places, the castle of

* Peter of Vaulx Cernay.

† William of Nangis.

‡ Puy Laurens.

Brom, when about one hundred of its defenders were shockingly mutilated; their noses were cut off, and their eyes were torn out; but one individual was left one eye so that he might be able to conduct the Christian savages to the town of Carabât. All through their terrible course the taking of several other castles and towns was followed by similar atrocities; prisoners were offered the choice of apostasy, or fire, or mutilation. When Montfort advanced to the attack of Toulouse the peasants laboring in the field, were slaughtered—men, women and children were butchered—villages, cottages, and farm houses were burned to the ground, and the Pope's legate also ordered the destruction of vines, and the whole of the standing crops. Thus, when town after town had surrendered, Montfort was sure to order the execution of the inhabitants, and thus for over twenty years were the Albigenses persecuted and slaughtered by the unmerciful hosts of the Head of the Church.

Among the mountains in the north of Italy there was another body of Christians known as the Waldenses; they were not identical with the Albigenses, but were different doctrinally and otherwise. They were distinguished for the most irreproachable conduct, and a more inoffensive people could not be found in all Europe. Claudius, Archbishop of Turin, wrote: "Their heresy excepted, they generally live a purer life than other Christians." The charge of heresy was, however, brought against them and for over the great period of five hundred years—from 1179 to 1689—these people were fearfully harassed by the dominant church. The first edict against them was issued by Pope Alexander III. in which he said: "We therefore subject to a curse both themselves and their defenders and harborers, and under a curse we prohibit all persons from admitting them into their houses—but if they die in their sin let them not receive Christian burial. . . . We likewise from the mercy of God, and relying upon the authority of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, relax two years of enjoined penance to those faithful Christians who, by

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the counsel of the bishops or other prelates, shall take up arms to subdue them by fighting against them." Soon after numbers of these people were burned at Bingen and at Mentz, and many others hunted from place to place, and scattered from country to country by an infuriated soldiery. Another edict was issued against them by Pope Lucius III. in 1181, and subsequently by other Popes and rulers. Pope Innocent VIII. in 1487 directed his nuncio and the Inquisitor General, Blasius, "To take up arms against the said Waldenses and other heretics, and to come to an understanding to crush them like venomous asps, and to contribute all their care to so holy and so necessary an extermination;" and afterwards Pope Pius IV., in 1560, authorized another brutal crusade against them, and the most terrible cruelties were again almost unceasingly perpetrated down to the year 1655, when, by the interposition of Oliver Cromwell, of England, they were partially discontinued, but were soon again renewed and continued until 1689.

A Catholic writer furnishes a narrative of one of the atrocities committed against the Waldenses in 1560, and states: "Having written you from time to time what has been done here in the affair of heresy, I have now to inform you of the dreadful justice which began to be executed on these Lutherans this morning, being the 11th of June, and to tell you the truth, I can compare it to nothing but the slaughter of so many sheep. They were shut up in one house, as in a sheepfold. The executioner went, and bringing out one of them, covered his face with a napkin, or benda as we call it, led him out to a field near the house, and causing him to kneel down, cut his throat with a knife. Then taking off the bloody napkin, he went and brought out another, whom he put to death after the same manner. In this way the whole number of eighty-eight men were butchered. I still shudder when I think of the executioner with his bloody knife in his teeth, the dripping napkin in his hand, and his arm besmeared with gore, going to the house and taking out one victim after

another, just as a butcher does the sheep he means to kill."* Tomasso Costo, a Catholic historian, also wrote concerning the cruelties to the Waldenses: "Some had their throats cut, others were sawn through the middle, and others thrown from the top of a high cliff; all were cruelly but deservedly put to death." The Waldenses, though subjected to such woful persecution, were not after all exterminated; they contended for liberty of opinion with extraordinary pertinacity; but it was not until the reign of Victor Emanuel, the present king of Italy, that they received the same privileges as others.

Esther Meade recalled these historical facts of religious persecution with a feeling of anguish and indignation. In addition to these cruelties, she had to remember the terrible Inquisition with its dread "familiars," its "Holy Office," its dungeons, its racks, screws, pulleys, weights, and other horrid instruments for producing the most agonizing torment. In imagination she could enter the gloomy "hall of torture," and in the dim light she could see the malignant judges of that infernal court; she could see the rack, and the waiting executioner. She looks again, and oh! fearful scene! She sees one of her own sex, she sees a woman, young, and once beautiful, but now naked—yes, actually naked—stretched out in dire agony, with dislocated limbs, bleeding and fainting before men! Men? No! but before fiends in human shape, called—Inquisitors. There they sit, or recline, with their books and crosses, and with the stolid indifference of the veriest savages. Alas! alas! no soothing voice can ever more be heard, no word of comfort spoken in that dolorous hour, no tender human heart throbs with sympathy for that poor victim, no eye is dimmed with pity for so much human suffering, no ear is pained to hear the death groans of that delicate girl, guilty most likely of no offence, save that of having perhaps spoken lightly of some suspicious priest, or of some absurd rite of the Church. The dew of death is upon

* In a letter to Ascanio Caraccioli—Dowling's Hist. Romanism.

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her brow, her parted lips are reddened with her own life blood, her clotted hair, her bruised body, and her broken limbs, elicit no word of remorse for her agony. Alone and unresisting she is in the hands of her brutal persecutors; the muffled walls conduct no sound of her distress to the outward world, it is shut out to her forever. The icy hand of the last deliverer is now upon her, but the actual stare of death is less terrible to her closing eyes and fading vision than the scowl of the accursed monsters who sit before her—the clerical monsters of the holy order of St. Dominic.*

Fearful reminiscence! Miss Meade shudders as if she were an actual witness of that scene of horror; but soon another view is presented. It is a gala day in Madrid; it is the Christian Sabbath. The pious who have attended church are moving towards the massive, gloomy building of the Inquisition. The Spanish King and his courtiers are sitting on an elevated stage which is richly carpeted, and the royal person is shaded by a silken canopy.† There are also to be seen familiars and grandees from Cordova, and from other cities. Bishops in rich robes are in conspicuous positions, and great numbers of priests, monks and friars, attest that there is to be a ceremony of some kind in which the Church is greatly interested. The sunbeams flash upon the mitres and crosses of ecclesiastics, and upon the swords and spears and other military weapons of the armed missionaries of the "True Faith." All present seem to be in a state of excited expectation. But hark! a bell tolls—it has been tolling at intervals since the early dawn. It cannot be the call for an imposing or brilliant religious ceremony; no, 'tis a death knell, the knell for another dread act of religious persecution. See! There is now a movement in the vast crowd in front of the Inquisition; its heavy gates—like the gates of hell—yawn wide, and a procession, as if intended to represent

* Described from a similar record in the Hist. of the Inquisition.—Moreri.

† Charles II. was present at the "splendid" Auto da fe of 1690 at Madrid.—Chamb. Enc.

an egress of spirits of the damned, moves slowly out. Dominican friars—called pious men—are in advance, bearing the repulsive banner of the “Holy Inquisition,” penitents, or those who have been terrified into compliance, follow; and then follow the bare-footed, sad, and long array of those who are destined for the flames. Some with pallid face are wounded and limping; some are too weak and emaciated to walk, and these, with others whose bones have been broken, and whose flesh has been mangled by the torture, are rudely borne towards the guarded space in front of the majesty, the episcopacy, and the nobility of Spain; and in the midst of the fanatical crowd whose eyes are hungry for a fresh scene of torture. The condemned are clad in the yellow *Sanbenito*, disfigured with infernal effigies, each wears the *coroza*, or pointed cap of infamy, and holds an extinguished torch; and each is attended by a Jesuit who hurls reproaches, instead of offering a word of pity or a prayer for mercy. They have now reached the great cross erected in the field of the Cruz del Quemadaro, the place of execution; the sentence is read, a blow is given to each of the condemned by one of the clerical officers of the Inquisition, and the accused are delivered over to the secular power. A feeble, formal, hypocritical plea in their behalf is muttered by a priest—a vile deceit; for the stakes are fixed, and the fuel is ready, and the condemned are chained and weeping. There is no offering of mercy in reply to that plea, for the Christian king ostentatiously sends his gilded and adorned fagot to be added to the pile. Oh horror! The flames ascend, a hundred human beings are shrieking, and groaning, and writhing in torture. The surrounding multitude are delighted, and thanks to God are given by the king, by the priests, and by the people, for this triumph of the True Faith, for the extirpation of so much heresy; and for the terrible spectacle of another *Auto da fe*.*

* On the 12th of May, 1680, eighty-three heretics, including twenty Jews, were burnt by the Inquisition, and a pile of wood eighty feet long and seven feet high was consumed in the religious ceremony.

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CHAPTER VI.

"THE CHRISTIAN AT WORK."

WHEN one is in a reflective mood it often happens that the most melancholy ideas will present themselves to the mind; and memory seems to be importuned to add link after link to a chain of events solely relating to the sorrows and sufferings of mankind. While Thought, like an angel of hope, has most delight in soaring towards the splendors of heaven, it is sometimes doomed to descend and to flutter like a bat amid the gloom and the ruins of misery.

Esther Meade, ever pleased to reflect upon circumstances which related to the happiness of her kind, would fain retain ideas of all that had been conducive to earthly bliss, but now, unable to control her thoughts, they seemed determined to rush down with impetuous haste to the very confines of woe, and to bring back to her view some of the darkest pictures of history.

Nowhere in the annals of cruelty and oppression, can more dreadful events be discovered than those which relate to religious persecution; such events were now vividly before her mind, and, upon her return from her early ramble to the bay, she could think of but little else. She tried to make the retrospection more agreeable, but the sad review of the past continued in its sullen course, and the wholesale destruction of human life caused or directed by Dominicans, Jesuits, or Inquisitors General; by Torquemada, by Diego Deza, by Spanish Kings, such

as Chas. I. and Philip II., and by the monster Alva, who slaughtered thousands in the Netherlands, simply on account of a difference of opinion in matters of faith, induced the most painful reflections, and seemed to verify a remark which she was surprised to hear her father once make—"That Christianity had already cost the world over fifty millions of human lives."

Christianity? Impossible! The faith of a true Christian led all to bear reproach, to forgive enemies, and to be kindly affectionate, one to another; even that faith in its most adulterated form was superior to anything that Paganism had produced; and were the whole world controlled by its inspired maxims, what love, joy and peace might exist among men; and then there would be no more war, no more dissension, no more persecution. Alas! how stern is history in dealing with many of our fondest delusions; and how many thousands are rudely awakened to discover that religious devotion is too often the prolific parent of debasing superstition and cruelty.

While thinking thus fondly of the just tendency of her faith, she sat before a window, and in the full light was looking intently at what appeared to be a coin or medal of antiquated appearance, which she had just selected from a numismatic collection belonging to her father. Now she turns the piece in her hand; it is a small medal, an ornament which was perhaps once proudly worn or displayed in the olden time by some pious young Christian lady in holiday attire. It was a medal made to commemorate a distinguished triumph of the Church over its enemies; and though its primitive wearer had grown from youth to age, and had long since passed away, yet there was the identical memorial still left to tell again of its own origin. Miss Meade once more holds it out from her; now draws it closer and lays it down. She takes it up again, and on looking closely at the obverse side, she sees the stamped effigy of a Roman Pontiff in cap and buttoned cape, and around it the words, "Gregorius XIII. Pont. Max. An. I.;" and then on turning the reverse side, she

finds the representation of a furious winged angel with a cross exalted in one hand, and a sword in the other, pursuing and slaying heretics, while surrounded by the dead and the dying; and over all this she could read the significant inscription: "Hugonitorum Strages 1572."*

Being in a contemplative mood, and while her gaze is fixed upon the old medal, the veil is again lifted and she finds herself almost in the centre of a large city—a Christian capital, too; for there are many great churches and tall steeples, and numerous crosses, some of which are up alone among the scattered night-clouds; while others gleam in the clear moonlight of the open sky. It is approaching the hour of midnight, the air is calm and genial, and there are many sleepers in the quiet houses around. There are but few revelers to be seen in the streets, yet occasional sounds of distant music and festivity reach the ear. The city must be gay, for it contains thousands of invited strangers who had come to witness the royal marriage which recently took place; but many of the wearied are now seeking repose, and the proud Parisian metropolis is comparatively still. But why are those armed bands moving around, and whither at this late hour moves that column of soldiers, whose weapons reflect the moonbeams? It is not a time of war, yet armed groups of citizens are to be seen at almost every street corner; and a large number of troops are assembled near the royal palace. But hark! the clock strikes twelve—it is midnight—the bell in the tower of the Louvre quickly tolls aloud in the clear air, and the lone boom of a heavy gun is heard in the distance. There are loud shouts and confusion; there is a rush of armed fanatics into a chamber where a wounded man is seeking repose; he is guarded by several Swiss soldiers who are speedily cut down by the assassins that have entered; the wounded man—the Huguenot leader, Admiral Coligny—is brutally murdered, and his mutilated

* In pulling down the old mint building, Cowgate Edinburg, a specimen of the medal struck by Gregory XIII. to commemorate the massacre of St. Bartholomew, was discovered.

body tumbled out of a window into the street, to be dragged about by an infuriated populace. Shots and heavy firing, and shrieks and cries of distress are now heard every moment. Huguenots, trying to escape, rush frantically through the streets, but are pursued and slaughtered by the yelling savages that follow, or are shot down from the windows of the houses. Numbers of the pursued, believing that the king would surely protect them, hurry onwards to the Louvre, but Charles, the monarch of France, is firing on them, his own people, from an upper window of the palace, while several of his attendants are constantly loading guns to enable him to shoot a greater number of his Protestant subjects.

All night long the slaughter continues, and fugitives are hunted from place to place in every quarter of the city. By grey dawn the streets are encumbered with the murdered, and the river Seine is glutted with the dead bodies cast into it; and on the morning of the 25th of August, 1572, the sun shone down upon bloody pavements and upon heaps of intermingled dead and dying, even around the very palace of the Louvre; and soon as the butchery was over, Catherine de Medici, of pious memory, queen dowager of France, gazed with satisfaction upon the havoc, and the King himself went out to see the hated slain, and to look upon the disfigured body of Coligny, to whom he had promised friendship and protection; and while stooping over his slaughtered people he expressed his pious felicity by saying that the "smell of a dead enemy was agreeable." Special orders were then given to continue the carnage, and the "Agents of Divine Justice" in their eagerness to advance the True Faith, deluged many of the French provinces with blood, until the exposed corpses of over thirty thousand human beings tainted the air and produced wide spread infection. The Parliament of France publicly eulogized the conduct of his Christian majesty, and the King and the Court returned thanks to God for His signal aid in crushing out so much heresy.

In great haste a messenger is despatched to another

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city. The news of the slaughter at Paris, and in other parts of France, is the cause of much joy and congratulation even within the sacred walls of St. Peters. The welcome words of the king's message which said that "the Seine flowed on more majestically after receiving the dead bodies of the heretics," is received by the Roman Pontiff with expressions of high approval. The joy in Rome is great; and Pope Gregory, the "Vicar of Christ," attended by his cardinals, goes in grand procession to the Church of St. Louis to sing "Te Deum laudamus," and to return special thanks to God for the triumph just gained over the enemies of His holy Church. The Pope's legate in France is instructed to felicitate "the most Christian King Charles," and to assure him that his Holiness "praised the exploit so long meditated and so happily executed for the good of religion." So important for the advancement of the Faith is the slaughter at Paris considered, that Pope Gregory orders medals to be struck in honor of the happy event, and the medal at which Esther Meade is still looking is one of those designed by the head of the Christian Church to commemorate the dreadful massacre of the Huguenots at Paris on St. Bartholemew's day.

So far the sickening remembrances had been of persecution by the Catholic Church, and Miss Meade would have made a plea for the reformed faith by trying to imagine that it was free from the contaminations of Rome, and therefore not subject to the abominable charge of fanatical cruelty. She would even have charitably shielded the Popish religion from the terrible accusations brought against it, but she was reluctantly forced to admit that that religion had almost desolated the earth; and that the whole system of paganism had never equaled the atrocities committed by the so-called "Mother Church." She wished to believe that no creed whatever emanating from Christianity, could ever be so debased as to punish unto death for opinion's sake, but not being able to escape from historical facts, she hoped to find competent author-

ity to place the burden of that iniquity upon Rome. But what said the same history as to the absurd ideas, the conflicting doctrines, the bitter dissensions, and the fierce persecutions by the adherents of Protestantism? Why that Luther, the great reformer, was so superstitious as to believe that epidemic diseases, earthquakes, and other evils, were produced by the direct agency of Satan. He believed that the Devil had often disturbed him at night; he believed in astrology, and that the peculiar appearance of the northern lights on a certain night, indicated the speedy approach of the end of sublunary things. He was an intolerant bigot, and inveterate against those who opposed him: he would have shed the blood of the Pope and the bishops; he even looked upon such reformers as Carlstadt, Erasmus, and Zwingli, as rank heretics, and, judged by his own words, he would, in support of his own crude faith, have taken human life. Luther exhibited great inhumanity towards the Anabaptists, and his disposition against them may be inferred by an extract of a letter which he addressed to his friend, Myconius; he wrote: "I am pleased that you intend to publish a book against the Anabaptists as soon as possible. Since they are not only blasphemous, but seditious men, let the sword exercise its right over them. For this is the will of God, that He shall have judgment who resisteth the power." Luther, even Luther, therefore wanted only sufficient strength and authority to be a theological despot and a persecutor.

And what of Calvin, the great French reformer? * He was a gloomy fanatic, who, filled with impious zeal, advo-

* In a sermon, preached at Dundee, Scotland, the preacher, a Presbyterian minister made the following remarks on Calvin:

"He was harsh, narrow, dogmatic, cold, cruel. The system of polity established while he lived in Geneva, was worse than that which prevailed in Naples, under Bomba. It was a system of brutal cruelty. One James Gruet, for writing some loose verses was beheaded. Even little boys and girls were liable to capital punishment for trivial offences. And need he name Servetus, a name which despite the one-sided sophistry of Calvin's defenders, rested like a bloody blot on that reformer's brow."

cated and defended the burning of the unfortunate Servetus for heresy; and he gloried over the infamous deed when he wrote: "Whoever shall contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to *death*, will willingly and knowingly incur their very guilt. This rule is not laid down by human authority, but it is God himself who speaks." Another reformer, the "meek Melancthon," approved of the vile act, and declared that the body of Servetus should have been chopped to pieces, and his bowels torn out.

Munzer, a disciple of Luther, a leader and a preacher of the Anabaptists, was a reckless agitator. Dissatisfied with the holy measures of the reformers; he pulled down the images which Luther had left standing in the churches; he proclaimed a community of goods, and incited his followers to plunder the houses of the wealthy; and, finally at the head of about forty thousand turbulent fanatics, he ravaged the whole country, and brought destruction upon himself and many of his unreasoning dupes.

Overlooking many other scenes of religious infatuation and cruelty which occurred on the Continent, the spectre of memory moves on and overshadows England; and there, too, the fury of religious strife is producing its blighting effects. The Christian sect has been almost annihilated; and frantic zealots are in the arena. Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Independents, are pursuing one another with deadly hostility. Archbishop Laud, like an Inquisitor General in the Star Chamber, is furious against seceders and non-conformists; and in his holy wrath he crops the ears, slits the noses, and otherwise mutilates disaffected Puritans. Whatever sect is in temporary power, and most patronized by rulers or by royalty, is always most oppressive; and during several reigns, according as Prelacy, or Puritanism, or Presbyterianism predominates, the mutual struggle for ascendancy devastates the land; and their deep hatred of one another, as well as their common hatred of Popery, is productive of horrible atrocities. There is hanging, and burning, and quartering, and

disemboweling, in almost every part of the kingdom, in behalf of what is for the time, the "True Faith;" and the knife, the axe, the rack, and the fagot, are readily put to fearful use even in Old England.

In Ireland the penal laws against Roman Catholics were most shamefully applied. This terrible code consisted of over one hundred acts of Parliament, solely enacted for the express purpose of enforcing Protestant doctrines. A Catholic schoolmaster dared not teach; and neither Catholic nor Protestant teachers were permitted to instruct Catholic children. A Catholic priest dared not reside in the country without special permission, and a reward was offered for the discovery of any priest or bishop not registered as having license as such. A Catholic priest convicted of having performed any religious ceremony, or of having married a Catholic and a Protestant, was condemned to be hanged; and all marriages between Catholics and Protestants were annulled. A wife on becoming a Protestant could take the entire property of her husband; and a son, by a like change of faith, might dispossess his father. There were many other similar enactments, and Catholics of every degree were sorely oppressed; and for the least unfriendliness, or resistance to most arbitrary laws, were liable to ruinous forfeitures or death; and the most inhuman cruelty and slaughter often followed. During the long period of this terrible oppression in Ireland, thousands were sent to bloody and untimely graves, and if the persecutions by Protestants have not been, perhaps, as infamously extensive as those of Catholics, it was only because the venomous power of Protestantism was too divided, or too limited. Protestantism, as well as Catholicity, possessed the genuine spirit, the vicious animus, of intolerance, and needed only the requisite strength and domination, to equal, or even to surpass, in oppression and savage cruelty, all that had been done by the imperious ecclesiastical power of Rome.

Were the angel of Destruction required to speak for the many slain of every land, he might say that the most

dreadful wars which have taken place in every part of the globe, were caused by intriguing priests, or by the virulence of religious feeling. And were it possible for an angel of Peace to re-animate the myriads of slaughtered men, he might plead that they should be placed in some world where there was no priest, no prophet, no altar, and no temple; and where it would be considered the vilest blasphemy to assert that the Supreme Being could be influenced and governed by passions alike to those of man—by anger, by hatred, by revenge. And the angel might then, perhaps, reveal an unwelcome truth by announcing to all, to the Pagan, to the Christian, and to the Moham-medan, that priests, and their pretensions, and their inspired books, had as yet only misled humanity.

CHAPTER VII.

"THE CHRISTIAN AT WORK."

WEARIED by these sad reflections, Miss Meade sought a little relaxation. Her father had been absent all day, and now it being evening time, she set out to pay a visit to old Sarah Afton, whose cottage was but a short distance from the parsonage. She found its inmate at her spinning wheel, and, as usual, in a conversable mood. Old Sarah, though very credulous and superstitious, was rather intelligent. She lived almost alone, her only household companion being a little orphan girl.

"Eh, but I'm glad to see you, young lady; I'm glad you've called again; I've had scarcely a visitor, and I've been a bit lonesome. Bless you, take a seat near me, and let me see your pleasant face. I've been thinking of old times—and what times there are to think of, to be sure—and this very day brings something sorrowful to my mind—it is an eventful day even in my own poor life."

"Oh, nothing, I trust, very serious, mother?" said Miss Meade.

"Mother! ah, you always call me mother; 'tis a pleasant name. I think every woman would like to be called mother, and to be a mother, though I've never been one—nor even a wife. Well, deary, 'tis sometimes sad even to think. Almost every memory seems mournful to the aged, and, as I am now long past life's three score years and ten, my thoughts are often bleak enough. Ah me!

all I used to know at your age, where are they? Only one poor old soul left—only one; except my sister's grand-son, and 'tis hard to tell on what part of the wide ocean he is just now. But, sweet lady, I will not burden your cheerful mind with any troubles of the past. You know your good father sometimes tells us, that 'sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.' "

"Well, but you may tell me your troubles, mother, unless you wish to keep them a secret; we all have sorrowful thoughts at times; and a grief may be blunted by telling it to a friend."

"I have few secrets from you, deary—few indeed from anybody. I have told you about many of the sad acts that took place hereabouts, years ago; I've shown you the spots where poor creatures were killed, and when we walked over there among the old graves, where many a monk lies buried, I've shown you where they said that martyrs were burnt; and you know the lone spot where I told you that my great-grandfather lost his life, don't you?"

Miss Meade nodded assent, and old Sarah went on.

"Well, its over a hundred years ago, this very second of May, since that poor man met his end; and, strange to tell, about a hundred years before that, on the very same day of the month, too, *his* grandfather was shot by Claverhouse."

"By Claverhouse?" Miss Meade interrogated, as if she had forgotten such a name.

"Yes, by the 'bluidy Claverhouse,' as the Scotch called him. He overtook the poor man and two other Covenanters out on a moor, and he ordered his troopers to shoot them; the three graves are there to this day."

"Yes, I now remember," said Miss Meade. "The Covenanters suffered terribly in the south, and in the west of Scotland; the Prelatists were their bitter persecutors."

"Aye, deary, there are many graves all over those wild moors. The Covenanters, poor bodies, were hunted from place to place by day and by night; Claverhouse and his troopers gave them little rest. You know that the Prot-

estant curates of those days--not like some of our good curates--were a set of carousing, godless men, who wanted to force all to attend the parish church; and in order to find out the ones that went to Conventicles, they gave the sojers the names of almost every one in a parish; the sojers stood outside the church on Sundays, and took down the names of the folks that came out, and all they found absent were at once marked suspected. The 'bluidy council,' as it was called, that sat in Edinboro', ordered the sojers to do the bidding of the curates, and then Claverhouse and his troopers did the rest. Ah me! There were curious warnings given in those times of what was going to happen. Armed horseman used to be seen galloping up steep hills that a goat could hardly climb, men without heads used to be seen standing in lonesome places; blood spots would come in bibles while some poor body was reading; and crowds of sojers would be seen marching through the moors, and then vanishing in a moment. This is what was known in Scotland as the 'killing time,' and the poor Covenanters had to flee to the glens, and the moors, and to caves, and other wild places, but they were watched, and hunted, and slaughtered, day and night without mercy; and often, after they had met to worship in some dark glen, Claverhouse would pounce upon them unexpectedly, and then there was bloody work.

"They prayed on the hillside, and sung in the glen,
In wilds far remote from the scoffings of men;
Yet the friends of the Lord, oft in pitiful plight,
Had to flee from the foe in the dead of the night."

A sweet Sabbath came, and the saints met once more,
To pray in the desert like others of yore;
But the troopers rushed on them, by Claverhouse led,
There were graves to be dug for the dying and dead."

Old Sarah repeated these verses from memory. "Ah me!" she continued, "but it was dreadful to hear tell of it. They tried every way to discover the hiding places of the poor creatures.

The dragoons once took a little boy of ten years, and as he would not tell them where his father was, they tied a cord round his thumbs, and suspended the terrified lad before his mother, and, though he was in great agony, he would tell them nothing; they then held his face over a large fire till his eyes were ready to start out, and his tender skin to crack, yet still he would not answer; he was then dragged outside and the soldiers told him they would blow out his brains. They took another boy and tied a cord round his brow, and twisted it with the butt end of a pistol, till the flesh was cut through to the bone, so that the poor boy died. When they didn't kill outright they tortured men and women in many ways. They stifled them in crowded vaults, they tied men down upon their backs, and put lighted matches between the fingers of both hands, until their very finger bones were sometimes burnt to ashes; and many others were starved to death in prison.* 'Tis dreadful to think of, young lady; for they often killed women as well as men. I've also heard tell of how they shot poor Marlon Cameron at Cumnock. This poor thing, with a few other women, were singing hymns in a green hollow place in the moss of Daljig, when a lot of troopers came along by chance, and shot them all. They were buried side by side on the moor. But I think that the murder of poor Driesthill, or John Brown, the pious carrier, was one of the most dreadful. The poor man, having risen early, went out to dig; he was suddenly seized by a company of horsemen, who drove him before them. Isabel, his wife, on looking out, saw him, and, snatching up her infant, exclaimed, "O! Lord, give me

* Dunnotar was a noted place for the persecution of Covenanters. There is a tombstone in the church yard of that place bearing the following inscription:

"Here lie John Scott, James Aitchison, James Russel, and William Brown, and one whose name we have not gotten; and two women also whose names we know not, and two who perished doun the rock; and one whose name was James Watson, the other not known, who all died prisoners in Dunnotar Castle, Anno 1685, for their adherence to the Word of God and Scotland's Covenanted work of Reformation."

grace for this hour." She went out, and for the first time saw the dreaded Claverhouse; and then she knew her great trial had come. Her husband was told to kneel on the wet sod, and to prepare for death. The poor man knelt down with great calmness, and prayed long for his enemies before him; he then pleaded pitifully for his wife and children, and then he embraced them tenderly, and left them to God. Many of the rough soldiers had tears in their eyes, and would have wept outright, only they were afraid. Claverhouse was impatient at so much delay, and told his men to fire. The pieces were leveled—there was a pause—poor Isabel's sobs were alone heard, but not a gun went off; the poor man before them, still calmly bowed and kneeling, awaiting his fate.

"God bless your tender hearts," said the weeping woman. "O! spare him to us, and the Lord will have mercy on you another day. Spare him, good men, for the sake of his poor children!" The savage Claverhouse then grew furious; he swore fearfully against the soldiers, and rudely pushed Isabel aside; he placed his pistol close to the ear of the kneeling man, and blew out his brains.

When the deed was done, Claverhouse shouted out, "What thinkest thou of thy husband now, woman?" "I ever thought muckle gude of him," said she, "and now mair than ever." "It would be but justice to lay thee beside him," replied Claverhouse. "I doubt not, replied she, "but your cruelty would lead you to that length; but how will you answer to God for this morning's work?" "To man alone," he said, "I can be answerable; as for God, I will take him in my own hands." After the departure of the troopers, poor Isabel tied up the shattered body of her husband with a napkin, and then drawing her children to her, she wept with them long and loud over the mangled body, and for the time would not be comforted. Poor, poor woman, she needed God to comfort her then; and strange to tell, the whole thing was foretold to her the day of her wedding; the minister, a Mr. Peden, said, "Isabel Weir, Isabel Weir, keep a winding sheet beside

you, for it may be hastily needed some misty morning;" and alas! so it was.*

Throughout the sad recital, Miss Meade was much affected. The simple narrative had readily touched her heart; but then she had to remember with some reluctance, that many of the persecuted Covenanters who had escaped from Scotland, and most of the oppressed Puritans who had left England, after having landed at Plymouth Rock in America, and in their eager desire to force their faith, or their peculiar doctrines on others, had united to establish an iron rule of religious despotism; the infamous Blue Laws had been enacted by them; they had burnt so-called witches; they had despoiled, mutilated, and hung unoffending Quakers, and for many years their course had been one of brutal fanaticism in the land of their adoption. So atrocious were most of their proceedings, that the name of Puritan is now held by many as the synonym for bigotry and intolerance.

Just as old Sarah had ceased speaking, she looked at a shadow which moved slowly along the little winding pathway close to the cottage. In a few moments a very old, grey-headed man stood bent before them in the open doorway. As he leaned with both hands upon his staff, the few thin, white hairs which hung below his broad brimmed hat were scarcely stirred by the evening air; but the setting sun which fell upon his meek, sad face, had burnished his scanty locks, as if to restore the golden hue which they had in his boyhood. Old Sarah got up immediately and went to meet him at the door; he gently took her extended hand, and she led him to a seat by her side. The old man's smile was radiant as he bowed to Miss Meade; and he muttered some words of thanks to Sarah.

"Well, Stephen, I thought you had forgot me; you've been away nearly two days, and you know that on this day, above all others, you should have been here early.

* See Wodrow's Hist. of Persecution of Scottish Covenanters.

Nearly two days is a long time for me not to see you, Stephen; a long time, when time is sometimes so long to me."

"I haint forgot thee, Sarah," replied the old man mildly. "'Twould be too late in life to forget thee noo, thoo knows that, lass; but I've been a bit busy to-day i' the church, and" said he lowering his voice, "I've been around the old spot again, a looking for *that*—seems they won't give it up yet—best to search no more; but still thoo says it maun coom some time yet afore we dee. Well, I gav it oop again to-day, and, as the e'en appeared, I felt a bit lonesome, and wanted to see thee again afore the night cam."

The setting sunlight was upon the old man's face as he looked up at Sarah, and the expression of his countenance was most placid and benevolent. Old Sarah placed her hand upon his uncovered head, and looked tenderly into his eyes—tenderly as a fond mother would look at her child; at that particular moment her youth seemed to return, and one might fancy that she was a maiden again, looking almost as beautiful as of yore.

"Poor Stephen! When will that night come that must separate us? When? It can't be far off now, Stephen?"

Sarah's voice trembled as she spoke, and the old man seemed to look vacantly at a shadow out upon the green sward before the door, as he softly said:

"It must coom, lass, it must coom; maybe soon, too; but then we maun meet again. Thoo's got my promise, and I've got thine, that who goes into the night first, maun coom back t' tother; I'll keep my word lass, and I well know that thou'lt keep thine. Mayhap we may both gan off together, and then we shall be as one at last upon that t'other shore."

Miss Meade was aware that there was some peculiar bond or relation between these two old people. She had more than once been present, and had heard their expressions of mutual esteem, if not of tenderness; and had just witnessed a touching display of affection, but the real

nature of the tie she as yet knew not. They were undoubtedly the oldest persons in the parish; they were not relatives, and old and young looked upon them with the kindest feelings.

Stephen Gray, for that was the old man's name, though better known by all as Old Stephen, had, so far, spent nearly the whole of his life at Pendell. He was some years older than Sarah Afton, and like her had never been married, and had neither kith nor kin that he knew of in the land of the living. Any way, he seemed content to remain near Sarah, whom he had known from youth, and to finish the journey of life in the little cottage, or rather hut, that he had so long occupied. This humble abode was near the church, even within the enclosed grave yard, and he appeared to like his home all the better because it was so near that spot to which he expected to be removed before many years. Stephen had been sexton at Pendell even before Mr. Meade had become the curate, but age had incapacitated him to some extent, and for a long period his principal duty was merely to keep the church, and a few old family tombs in order, and to have a kind of supervision over minor matters connected with the church and the cemetery. At leisure hours he seemed to take a quiet pleasure in wandering among the many graves, as if to commune with the dead, or as if anxious to recall to remembrance some of those who had long passed away; he could, however, almost readily point out the resting places of nearly all, simple or gentle, who had died in the parish during the last fifty years; and wanderers who had been long absent in foreign lands, upon their return had only to apply to Stephen to be shown the grave of a father, or a mother, which no other person could, perhaps, discover.

Miss Meade was very partial to old Stephen, he was as gentle and submissive as a child, and was always pleased when she asked him to do her a service. In one respect, he was very useful to her. She was passionately fond of music, and was acknowledged to be one of the finest or-

ganists within the bounds of several counties. Indeed, good judges had often asserted that all she had to do was to go to London to secure a high position as a performer on that instrument; at all events, it might be truly said, that, owing to her splendid execution on the organ, her father's congregation had been more regular in attendance at church than they would have been if left only to the attraction of his best sermon, or to the more vapid or grandiloquent ones of the rector or bishop. Her most thrilling effects on that instrument were, however, made when she was alone, or at least when no one was present in the old church but herself and Stephen; and whenever she felt troubled or dispirited, she would wait up until almost all in Pendell had retired, and then call upon him. Stephen would open the church, and attend her were it midnight; and when he had learned that she did not wish to have it known that she practised or played thus privately, he kept the matter a secret—even from old Sarah—and the few who chanced to hear the organ at late hours, quickly circulated the report that the exquisite midnight music was produced in the sanctuary by some supernatural agency, or by the wandering ghosts of the monks of other days.

A short time after sunset, Miss Meade left Sarah's cottage, but before she went away, she beckoned to old Stephen, and when he got to the open door, she whispered a few words in his ear; he slowly bent his head, as if in compliance with some request, and in a few hours afterward, when the night was dark, he stood just outside the porch of the old church, holding its heavy, rusted key. He had not been long there before Miss Meade came gliding along the grave-bordered pathway. Not a word was spoken; she merely put her hand quietly upon his shoulder, the massive, worn door then swung slowly upon its grating hinges; and they both went into the dimness of the silent sanctuary.

Had some spirit of a sainted martyr entered the venerable building to invoke divine aid, no pleading petition

could be more tender or affecting than the pathetic sounds which were now audible; had some poor tortured heretic been bending before a cruel inquisition, there could be heard no more tremulous appeal for mercy. There came with those same sad sounds, the weeping of woe, the depths of despair, the sobbing of the sorrowful, the hopeless beseeching of the condemned, and the very groans of the dying; and then the shout of the bigot, the fury of the fanatic, and the crash of destruction, rushed wildly along aisle and chancel, and thundered in every vacant cell and empty vault. After a solemn pause, there then followed the mourner's prayer, touching and exquisite, closing with the soft voices of angels, which gradually died away in whispers of peace and hope for the wounded heart.

The church was again closed; old Stephen plodded slowly homeward. Of what nas he been thinking? had those angel voices touched his heart? for before he entered his humble abode, he had more than once to wipe away the tears which had suffused his eyes.

By this time the night had grown somewhat stormy, and Esther Meade, feeling rather discomposed, was led by her adventurous spirit down to her favorite station at the Bay. To see the ocean in its wildest state, was to her at all times a magnificent sight, and now her eyes could be gratified to the fullest extent. The wind had greatly increased, and the upheaval of distant billows could be seen along the troubled line of the horizon; the light-house, away out, being sometimes scarcely visible in the commotion. Now the hoarse dirge of the gale seemed to wall out from the bursting bosom of the deep; now there is a lull, and again the wind swells upon the ear like a melancholy cadence; the savage surf is heard like the clash of cymbals; and the rush of water along the shore or into numerous caves, comes like distant voices, or resounding echoes. Amid this wild chorus of sounds, Miss Meade almost fancied herself in attendance at a grand concert of thousands; and the tall, beacon tower, with its

revolving light, seen looming up at times among the breakers, was then to her like the conductor of the immense orchestra, swinging his baton of flame while beating time for the waves.

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CHAPTER VIII.

A MISSIONARY WANTED.

A DREARY plain, almost a desert plain, in Winter a wild waste, bleak and inhospitable; in Summer time brown, arid and dusty; a few stunted or withered looking trees here and there; scarcely a shrub, or a green herb, and very little grass to be seen, scanty shade or cover for man or beast; no clear stream to invite the thirsty traveler, but stagnant pools in deep, muddy pits, with slushy margins, disfigured the surface of heathy ground, giving the whole an unsightly appearance. A wild place where one would fancy that thieves, or Thugs, might roam with impunity. A place for robbery, or a place for murder; and a place where no doubt these crimes had been committed. On the north, in the distance, this wide plain was bounded by rising ground, near which were several wretched looking huts, inhabited by human beings apparently the most squalid and destitute. At first view one would suppose the men to be the veriest savages, the women the most degraded, and the children, ragged and filthy, the most forsaken. Poverty, ignorance, superstition, and crime, seemed to have reduced them to the lowest condition, and to have left the darkest impress upon the people and their surroundings; and a pious humanitarian upon visiting these outcasts, might readily imagine that he was in some far off, benighted land, among a brutal race, where life was insecure; among the lowest caste of men, with whom worship, if such were ever known, was

but riotous bloodshed; among idolaters, where the deep ruts of the car wheels of Juggernaut could be seen on the highways, or a rude temple be discovered sheltering the hideous form of some pagan god; or where some foul den might be found in which human beings were offered in sacrifice. Here, he might surely say, there is not only ample scope for missionary exertions, but for charitable efforts in which the bodily wants alone should be considered as possessing a paramount claim, for the apparent barbarism and destitution of the people can hardly be exceeded upon any part of the habitable globe.

Yet one would think that the surprise of such philanthropist should be great when he remembered that this land was a Christian land, and that the savages before him were accounted a Christian people; that he was standing, not in the wilds of Africa, but upon the very soil of Old Britain, where Christianity had been carefully fostered by generations of kings and rulers for over a thousand years; where a priesthood—a legion—wealthy and influential, were still employed and lavishly paid, to propagate Christian doctrines; and where Christian churches were very numerous, the greater number of which being richly endowed by the State.

Partly as an evidence of this, a few miles to the south, the grey tower of Pendell church could be dimly seen; and further, in the opposite direction, away beyond the high ground, the steeple of Betnall parish appeared, faint as a shadow, above the tall trees that bounded the view. Still the Heath, or "Devil's Dale," as it was commonly called, with its savage inhabitants, was not for some reason, included within the boundaries of either Pendell or Betnall parish; it had once been, and in fact still was, part of a large confiscated estate belonging to some lordly freebooter, who, for some vile or special service, had it granted to him by some pious monarch, and this estate was then as exempt from the payment of ordinary rates and assessments as if it had been the property of an archbishop. But in the course of time, after years of extrava-

gance and dissipation, other taxes or claims had accumulated, over which the king had no control, and a host of creditors, as a last resource, had placed their claims in Chancery, and, once within its gripe, Chancery had drained the revenue of the estate; had let its broad acres grow wild and barren, its manor house tumbled almost to ruins, had harassed more than one heir expectant to the grave, and had scattered the impoverished serfs and retainers to their only refuge on the bleak heath, where they and their descendants, despised and neglected, had long become outlaws and vagabonds.

As it was, neither Betnall, nor Pendell, was willing to admit the Heath was within its parochial limits; neither did the authorities of either parish wish to be burdoned with additional paupers from among the irreclaimable thieves and cut throats of "Devil's Dale," still, as a matter of self-protection, something had to be done to limit, and, if possible, to prevent the incursions of such vagabonds, and by united effort, with aid from other quarters, a kind of prison, or place of torture, called a workhouse or poorhouse—an institution of benevolence rather common in England—was erected on a convenient boundary not far from the limits of the Heath, and such of the wild race as had the temerity to wander towards Betnall or Pendell, either as aged or infirm mendicants, or as adventurers to poach or to pilfer, were too well watched to be always able to escape detection, and, once in the clutches of certain officials, little pity was shown; for if they of the Heath could not be convicted as thieves, they were generally imprisoned as vagrants, and unmercifully dealt with as a warning to others. So the pious, the orderly, and the prominent inhabitants of the two parishes, generally treated their rude neighbors with the greatest indifference or contempt, and these neighbors, feeling in turn that they were despised, and that civilization had as yet only offered them the refuge of a prison and the status of criminals, felt aggrieved and resentful, and took every opportunity of returning evil for evil, and of committing depre-

dations, great or trivial, as time, place, and circumstances permitted.

It was evident, therefore, that a feeling of dislike or hostility on one side, had engendered a similar feeling on the other, and they of the Heath, for a particular reason, in one respect, did not evince any anxiety whatever to be patronized by either parish, or to press a claim for legal recognition as being the parishioners of any place; for, isolated as they were, like a community of bandits or outlaws, and almost totally indifferent as to any duty or responsibility they might owe to king or country, they felt exempt from the payment of any kind of rates or taxes, and any attempt ever made to collect such from them was unsuccessful; and, as any effort of the kind would be quite useless, they lived, and struggled, and wrangled, and starved, and died in their own peculiar way; few, indeed, ever caring to know more about them than that they were kept domiciled as far as possible within the bounds of the dreary Heath or Devil's Dale. Besides, having the native inhabitants, the Heath had others also, it was the resort of refugees from justice from all quarters; and gypsies and other wanderers, often found their way to the wild region, and must have had a rude welcome, as they frequently remained long enough to indicate that they were not treated as intruders, or despoiled of any of the scanty wares which they bartered here and there for a living. Sometimes people from the adjoining parishes would pay a kind of holiday visit to the Heath to see the "wild folk," just with the same kind of curiosity that would lead others to enter a menagerie to see wild beasts; but those who went to the Heath, went at their own risk, and often had to return minus a watch, a knife, a handkerchief, or other articles of greater or less value; those who were lucky enough to escape the fingers of a thief, often went home with cut or torn or spattered clothes, as an evidence of the enmity that existed against the respectable outer world; and it was not only darkly hinted, but once in a while spoken openly, that some had

recklessly entered the Heath who were never known to have returned.

Notwithstanding this state of things, a few persons, who were traders, and a few such as Mr. Meade and his daughter, who really commiserated the condition of the people of the Heath, and who had given evidence of a friendly desire to do something for their benefit, went occasionally amongst them, and though received coldly or with indifference, were not molested. The great missionary societies of Britain had never made any serious attempt to rescue these people from the barbarism into which they had been plunged. Home missions may, no doubt, have been considered altogether too commonplace. There was something piously romantic in a Reverend hero of the Cross wandering far over sea and land, to make eloquent signs to dusky, well-fed savages in Africa, or in an endeavor to make his frail attempts at Sanscrit or Bengalee, understood by educated Hindoos on "India's coral strand;" but for a man of ability to be pent up in a wild moor, and to spend time and talents simply in order to Christianize his own brethren, fellow-countrymen at home, was too unostentatious to be ranked as "missionary," and too monotonous to invoke the true missionary spirit. The heathen, thousands of miles away, were supposed to be in much greater need of missionary attention, and heathen lands were said to be the proper missionary field; for it had been argued that a class like those of the Heath, who lived in a Christian country, and who could be even indirectly benefitted or controlled by the influence of a Christian community, were not at all so much in need of spiritual aid as the destitute in far heathen lands, who had never heard of the Bible, and who had not the healthy every day example of Christian believers before them. Still something by way of religious instruction had been attempted on the Heath. An obscure body of Methodists called Ranters, after many trials and much perseverance and persuasion, had succeeded in impressing some of the people with the idea

that they were leading wicked lives, and that if they refused the Gospel, their sufferings in another state of existence would be many fold greater than the toils and poverty and wretchedness in this life. So, after awhile, a "society" had been formed, and a small chapel erected; and as the preachers of this sect were rather illiterate and unpretending, they went among the "wild folk," no doubt with the best intentions, and as if only their equals in humble position; and their peculiar threats and appeals—generally used by Methodist sects—had such an effect upon the credulity and ignorance of the rude people, that many became so "religious" that noisy demonstrations of worship could be often heard far and near on the wide plain.

The barbarians of the Heath being, however, thoroughly ignorant, could not really understand, or at all appreciate the so-called "simple doctrines" which were preached; these not only bewildered the stupid souls to whom they had been presented, but led to angry arguments as to their meaning, and thus perplexed these boors soon grew tired of the religious novelty, and their pious, but rather wild excitement, gradually died away. Certain acts of the ranting exhorters had somehow dissatisfied many of their new converts, who had formed the opinion that these exhorters were in many respects as fallible and as exacting in their way as other preachers in higher social position; besides, instead of a free gospel, demands had been made very often for money for various religious purposes. The preacher, too, had to get something for his support; something had to be given for the circulation of the bible—though few on the Heath had read, or could even read a line of it—and aid was required for missionaries away in foreign lands. The trifle asked or given was, however, a great sum to people who seldom handled a shilling; so they of the Plain feeling themselves miserably poor, and having a greater share of pity, rough as it was, for their own destitute children than for exhorters or foreign heathens, looked with distrust or indifference upon the

preachers. Sunday was made a day of gloom, and as they had been warned against indulging in the sports and recreations to which they had been accustomed, they soon fell back into their old habits, and in a short time the great majority of the converted abandoned the chapel for their old resort, the low tavern or drinking house that had long been established amongst them; here, they thought, they could feel more social than any where else, and the rude joviality which occasionally took place made them often forget the toil that was before them; and if they slept an hour after the effects of a pint of drugged beer, they felt more satisfied than if they had to sleep an hour under a drowsy sermon, very little of which they could comprehend.

This low place and a smaller drinking den of the same kind, were the only resorts on the Heath that supplied beverages for the inhabitants, and he or she who could spare a penny out of the groat that had been amassed in this impoverished region, was sure to seek solace with it at the tavern. These haunts were the central spot for scenes of drunken sports, brawls and dissipation; and here it was where matches were made for wrestling, and for feats of strength or agility, and where challenges were given for brutal fights, in which kicking, biting, and foul, and often deadly blows, were legitimate methods of battering, and pounding, and disfiguring the human body in the most terrible manner; and then there were cock fights, and dog fights, and, by way of change of sport, fathers, and even mothers, backed their sons—from eight to fifteen years old—in combat with children of the same age, the sons of others, and the fights between cocks and dogs, and children, often, indeed almost always, led to combats between the respective owners or parents, and on such occasions the whole plain might well be called the "Devil's Dale," and the people the veriest fiends.

The precarious livelihood of mostly all of these people was earned by almost incessant labor, and by employment in which children of tender years were forced to assist to the

utmost of their strength. The women, too, had not only to manage household matters, but to spend most of their time among rude, indecent men at heavy work, which was not only sufficient to break down the strongest constitution, but to dwarf and deform the children engaged therein; and the almost total disregard paid to difference of sex, led to what would be called the greatest demoralization. As it was, coarse, drunken men seemed to tyrannize over women, and men and women, as if anxious to lighten their own labor, compelled mere children, by rude and indecent threats, and often by blows, to do the most slavish work, fit only for strong and active men.

Not far from the long row of huts or dwellings on the Heath, and close to a wide, deep pit, were several low, rickety sheds; some of them were sparingly thatched, or covered with straw, others with a kind of matting, and others with rough tiles. Under these sheds were piles of clay moulded into the shape of bricks, and left to dry, previous to their being placed in the kiln. A number of women and children were in one of the pits; some of them stood with bare feet in the thick, muddy water up to the ankles. The women dug the clay and shoveled it into barrows that the larger boys and girls wheeled slowly away to a place where men and women, and some children were actively treading the clay into soft, sticky mud to prepare it for the moulders. Such of the children as were not strong enough to wheel the barrow, carried baskets of clay upon their heads, and if they stopped on the way to rest for a minute or two, they were shouted at and sometimes struck by men and women, who seemed determined to force them to do all the work they could possibly perform. The laborers were covered with dirt and mud, and the children's hair was matted with clay, and there were scabbed and bleeding sores on their heads, faces and feet; and several were so much covered with the dry, adhesive mud, as to have their very features hidden. In another part of the plain was the entrance to a coal pit, in the murky depths of which the toilers—mostly men and

boys—were hidden from the outer world for dreary periods of from fifteen to twenty hours at a time; and here, too, women and children were obliged to labor, carrying coal in barrows and buckets until painfully wearied; and the continued toil, in all quarters, from dawn until dark, and during all kinds of weather, so fagged and wearied the unfortunate people, that the strongest stimulants were too often craved by men and women, more eagerly than food; and children, instead of thinking of sport or play, were glad, in their periods of leisure, to drop asleep on the wet, muddy, black ground, and forget their premature sufferings.*

The mud huts, or houses of the heathen population, were only such as would give to a civilized person the most dreary idea of domestic comfort. Each hut was but a single filthy apartment. The rain often came through the wretched roof, and as there were but few huts which had a chimney, or even a hole left for a window, the smoke had to make its exit through the open door, or the best way it could. There was nothing that could be called furniture; a rough stool or bench, and a few of the most simple cooking utensils might be found in some of the dwellings, but the greater number of them had neither bedstead nor table, nor even a stool; and the wretched, wearied inmates, after having partaken of the most scanty and unwholesome food, were compelled at night to huddle together promiscuously, in great discomfort, on the wet or damp ground floor, to find such rest as nature might fortunately bestow, after their many hours of the most severe toil.

But there were others on the Heath who managed to escape the misery of such slavish labor—a class who could not see any virtue in industry where poverty was its reward. These were the thieves, the poachers, and the robbers of the plain, who regularly visited the adjoining parishes, and, evading bailiffs and detectives, generally

* See Note 1 in the Appendix.

returned with sufficient plunder, in the shape of game, domestic fowl, sheep or lambs, clothing, or any article that they could stealthily lay hands on, and, if the plunder was abundant, it was freely shared among the more destitute of the Heath; and then there was a period of feasting and revelry for many.

It would not only be a useless, but a dangerous attempt for any officer of justice to follow a culprit to the Heath; a summons, warrant, proclamation, or an authoritative order of any kind, would be only laughed at. Once safely back among his confederates, the thief might hurl defiance at his pursuers, for he was sure to find ready refuge and protection; and the sharpest detective could neither, by threats nor prayers, obtain the least information, either to identify the fugitive or lead to an arrest; and if even an arrest were made, should the officer of the law, with a dozen aids, if he had them, persist in trying to take away his prisoner, he and his assistant were sure to be maltreated most brutally—in any case they would be severely abused—and the mob of lawless villians, by whom they were surrounded, would not hesitate a moment to take life—even the lives of all if necessary—rather than yield one victim up to unmerciful magistrates; for the poor wretches of the plain entertained the opinion that they were somehow injured and oppressed, and kept in a state of want, and almost in a state of slavery, by pious and respectable society generally; and the minions of the law were not only looked upon as agents of gross oppression, but were accounted no higher in the estimation of most of those half-wild barbarians, than a highwayman or murderer would be held among civilized people. Believing, therefore, that they had been wronged and robbed by the wealthy and powerful around them, they felt it a duty to despoil in return—in fact, to be revenged; and often, indeed, when they went out for plunder, if nothing could be more readily found, they would strip the clothes from children; and, if a chance offered, even kidnap the children themselves. And for years there had been perishing

little slaves on the plain, who had forgotten their parents; and there were parents, far and near, who bewailed their children. There was oppression and distress in the land, which the law had not remedied; there was revenge and blood which the law could not well reach. There were tears and suffering which well to do society had overlooked; and there was a plague spot of poverty, superstition, and crime, in the very heart of old England, which rich missionary societies had neglected, in their hot zeal to lavish pious funds among well-fed Pagans, or to mitigate imaginary evils in the malarious climates of distant lands.*

* See Note 2.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BRITISH HEATHEN.

IF a tired traveler on some dreary desert were anxiously seeking rest from long fatigue, or shelter from a sudden storm, he might hesitate to enter the only place of refuge that offered if it were as dingy, unclean, and suspicious in appearance as the "Rook's Nest," which was the name of one of the drinking houses on the Heath; and if he were possessed of a watch or a sum of money which he wished to keep in his possession, he might further hesitate, and would most likely prefer to take his chance beneath a gloomysky or under a threatening cloud, than enter such a nest at a late hour, or trust the black brow and scowling aspect of the thick-set, wolfish looking fellow who was the landlord and occupant of the dilapidated two-storied brick fabric, over whose battered front door was nailed a piece of board, upon which some rare and learned genius of the plain had succeeded in carving out two significant words thus— "Rook's Nest." Then, if the same traveler in his wistful search should move towards the other old building across the way, and see its dirty entrance, its broken windows, and see its rough, projecting sign, that probably the same artist had lettered, "The Bull Dog," he might quickly turn away in despair from a place of promise so doubtful, when he also saw the stupid look and heavy features of the half drunken, one-eyed host who sat like some unclean beast in a foul den waiting for his prey.

These were the two inns, or rather drinking houses, of

the Heath, and the great places of resort for nearly its entire population. The Rook's Nest, being the larger of the two, was the haunt of those principally engaged at work in the mines, and its name was somewhat appropriate, every one of its customers being almost as black in appearance as the veritable rooks themselves. The "Bull Dog," on the other hand, was chiefly patronized by the laborers of the brick yards, who were more rough in manner, and more willing to get drunk and quarrel, than, perhaps, those who favored the other house; and though each of these resorts had its own particular class of customers, it was common for them to mingle at either place to drink, to wrangle, or to fight, as the mood of the hour chanced to direct.

It was Sunday morning—not a day of rest or recreation for all on the Plain—and nearly church time; for the faint sound of the bells of Betnall parish could be heard now and then in the clear, calm air. A number of laborers who had been at work from an early hour in the clay pits, had just strolled one after another towards their respective huts, "just to clean oop a bit," that is to rinse a portion of the mud from their faces and hands in dirty water. Several of the children were still kept busy piling unburnt bricks under the sheds, while a few other children—the sickly and worn out—were stretched listlessly here and there on the bare ground, as if anxious for rest that should be unbroken forever. By degrees a number of squalid looking laborers, men and women—squalid and ragged even in their Sunday attire—had assembled in the small, filthy tap room of the Bull Dog. In a short time the place became crowded; the day was warm, and the cloud of tobacco smoke that filled the place seemed to discompose none but the myriads of flies that were buzzing around, or diving into the clammy pewter mugs which were very seldom polished. The rough people who had entered appeared in a hurry to commence the day's carousal by first swallowing the strongest stuff that Ned Bogg could hand over his counter; and Ned, with his one

blinking eye seemed to watch every drop as if willing to give only scrupulous measure to his craving customers. One might think he was dispensing to a diseased set some precious elixir of life, instead of the very essence of death.

"Oy," said one fellow after wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, "that's a rare un yer got Ned, whoy thur will choake the bitch at th' Rook's in less than a minnit."

"Thut she wull lud," replied the landlord, "she's a rare un, sure enough; an I'll lay an extra croon that she'll lay oop the Rook's' beauty within 'alf an oor, and Tom Slaughter will lose another wager. Well, damn un, I'd loike t'let un lose a poond or more; and thoo'll do it, my lady." Here Ned Bogg, the aforesaid landlord, lifted on his counter a great, ugly bull slut, and patted her as affectionately as his course nature would permit, while his gazing customers were delighted. He had got this brute as a rare present; she had been stolen a short time previously from a farmer a few miles distant, and Ned had sent a challenge to his rival, Tom Slaughter, the landlord of the Rook's Nest, who had another dog of the same kind. Heavy bets had been made on the dogs, and great sport was expected.

"Whoy Bob, thees back brave un! What's the look?" All eyes were now turned upon the man who had just entered. Bob Cuffer, who had been so addressed by the landlord, was a noted poacher, or rather thief; he had been "out" with felonious intent as usual, and had only returned a few hours previously, with some plunder and some news, of which all present seemed eager to have a share. Bob's news was almost as welcome as the spoil which he was willing to divide among those who had greatest need. He was a daring, able bodied chap, ready for a bout with a bailiff or a detective, and as he had never been "trapped" by either one or the other, or known to come off second best in an encounter with any who had been on the look out for him, he was a favorite; and the relation of his adventures whenever he returned had all

the attractions of a romance for his lawless associates on the Heath.

"What's th' look?" continued the landlord, who handed Bob a glass of the strongest liquor, which was drunk off in a moment. "Ise glad thee's coom to meet Jack Clench, I wood'na vur a poond hav un say that you went off an wur afeard to coom to time."

"Oi beant afeard uv Jack Clench, nor noother mun, an he knows it." Bob Cuffer, when he said this, swaggered like a bully from side to side, and held out one of his big arms in defiance.

"Hoy, Bob! but thee's got a coot on th' yarm. Hast had a scuffle with any t' oodside?" said the landlord.

There was a wound on the man's arm, but Bob, looking at it with indifference, replied:

"Yes mun, I got into clootches wi' big Jones, the bailiff, an iv he gav me that scratch wi' a pistol ball, I gav him a broke skull wi' a big stun as big as his yed. I laid un low, that I did, an he'll maybe get boxed oop an in aud Steeve's care i' th' Pendell choorch yard afore anoother week. He won't trooble me again, he won't.

The fellow chuckled at his vile exploit, and his savage hearers uttered a chorus of approval in anticipation of the death of the unfortunate bailiff. Treating the event as a matter of no importance, the landlord filled out another glass for Bob and inquired the news.

"Oy," said Bob, "but I maun show you the swag first. I got this watch, and there's his pistol, too, dam un; I gav uncle Jo his coat an boots." These were things which he had taken from the bailiff; and the pistol and watch were handed around to satisfy the curiosity of those present. He then told them that he had been all through Pendell and Betnall, that he had been at the rector's place, and had picked up some clothes and other things in an outhouse; "an see here," said he uncovering a small basket which hung on his arm, "here's one o' the rector's tennants that never paid un ony toytles," and Bob laughed heartily.

Crouched in the basket was a valuable game cock, one of a rare breed, great to fight, for which parson Rockett, rector of Betnall, and magistrate for the county, had paid a high price, in order to afford amusement, and sometimes profit, to himself and a few chosen friends who delighted in testing to the utmost the fighting qualities of such birds when a chance offered; in fact the rector and his select friends—being all wealthy and of course respectably pious—were as fond of this kind of sport as they were of horse racing, or of following the hounds. Bob Cuffer who was also partial to feathers, and who prided himself in being as good a judge of game cocks as any rector in the kingdom, saw the parson's prize, and determined that it should be his own; so here was the bird to produce unbounded admiration; and Bob, who felt that this act of relieving the parson was one of the most meritorious kind, was the hero of the hour. Some laughed to think how the rector would deplore his loss, and demand the arrest of the unknown "beak hunter," while others were perhaps speculating in their own stupid way whether the sermon which the rector might preach that day in Betnall church would be one on charity and forgiveness, or whether its text and burden would be, in conformity with his every day practice towards the sinners of the Heath, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

After having related some of his minor adventures during his raid into the parishes, Bob Cuffer gave his eager hearers some of the news. "Nance Carey, hur that was in for a vamp' i' th' woorkhouse, smothered her young un, an then tried to set fire t' th' place; there was th' deevil to pay amoong them, an all were cursing Nance; an noo she'd be lagged surely, oonless we get hur oot sum way. An' Dick Vance, him that got hur th' kid, has coot- and run off, cause Rockett gav a warrant ver un. Little mercy vur Nance i' th' parson's prison; Rockett aint purtickler hoo he deals wi' oor kind i' th' woorkhouse.

"Rockett!" exclaimed one of the women, "whoy wen his maid throost hur twins i' th' doong pit, the parson

hooshed it 'oop, an helped hur wi' cash to gan off; but seems th' rector knew more'n he ought to as who th' father uv th' babbies was; seems his wife knew more'n she cared vur too, an she hooried th' wench away."

"Oy," said another woman, "'twere caus th' babbies wur his'n; an 'twant the foorst lass that he sarved th' loike, and mayhap woont be the last oonless his wife can keep a watch on un better; but he don't care vurshe, he'd bung hur eyes iv she said a woord."

"Wull let th' parson go vur a bit," resumed Bob Cuffer, "he's npot else to do arter he prays an feeds o' Sunday, an more'n I knows vur what he sent his maid off, but av he hurts Nance vur dooin once, what he knows lots o' th' great uns oop in Loonun doos a' th' time, we maun call an see im sum night when th' moon's abed." This threat against the rector was well received, and Bob then spoke on in the matter of news. "The chap they calls th' bishoop oot o' Loonun, or sum oother great place, is a coomin doon t' th' parishes, an Rockett an a whole lot o' parson chaps will be along t' convarm—yes, t' convarm; that maun be it."

"Convarm? what's that," exclaimed one.

"Whoy, I dunno," said Bob, scratchin his head rather reflectively, "it's t' convarm i' th' choorch, they sez. They gets, I b'lieve, a lot o' maids an chaps drest oop loike t' gan t' th' choorch, and then they gavs em summat vur a dance at th' gloamin; and then this ere bishoop an th' parson chaps puts off vur th' rector's an has a goort veed o' wittles, an arter that they takes summat to drink; and they all gaus t' anoother choorch' and begins again loike."

"Convarm, oy I know it now," said the landlord, fancying that he had made a discovery. "I'll joost convarm my bitch here again ony that th' bishoop brings vrom Loonun or oot else. I'll wage on thee, lass; that I will," and he again patted the bull slut, on the counter.

"I aint sure that's it," said Bob Cuffer—"it may be—but he went coom here to convarm or fight wi th' deevil

hissel, or th' bitch either; or any other on th' plain. But, hark, I've got oother news vur all," and then lowering his voice a little, he said, "ther's one will coom doon here soon, one's that's not a parson, nor a rect'r, nor noot oot kind, but i' furriner, a cove vrom far abroad, that's coom herr t' buy oop all this land; and he's bought it vur sartin; the aud manor hoose, an all the aud estate o' Mayston, an he'll coom here sure, an mayhap pull doon th' Rook's Nest, an turn oot th' rooks, and level this aud Bull Dog house t' th' groond, an pull doon everything, an hoont us all off vur varmin—that's what th' rect'r, you know, calls we, *varmin*—an we'll all ha vt' gan off t' th' woorkhouse, or off wi th' gypsies."

This part of the news caused no little excitement. There was a storm of oaths, and there were threats of fierce defiance, which were not mere idle threats; but which, to carry out, every man, and many of the women present, would have risked life or limb; and were it necessary, many of them would be then and there ready to apply the torch, or to use the knife or the bullet in defence of the title which they considered they had to the Heath by virtue of long possession.

In a few minutes, when the explosion of anger had nearly passed, Bob Cuffer went on to relate how he got his information. He said that, when passing through Pendell, he had met old Stephen—who was regarded even as a friend by all on the Heath—and that Stephen had told him that a stranger had called at old Sarah Afton's cottage, to make some inquiries about Pendell and its neighborhood, and about some of its old inhabitants, and about some also who had been long dead; that Sarah had sent the stranger to Stephen, and that they both went together to the Pendell grave yard to try and find an old family tombstone, so old that even Stephen himself was unable to make the discovery. The stranger had a book—a chronicle of Pendell—which he cousulted from time to time. He then told Stephen to get him a spade, and, after a little time, he commenced to dig in a distant and over-

grown corner of the grave yard close to the angle of the wall, and that when he had cleared away nearly a foot in depth from the surface, he uncovered a marble slab. The date and most of the letters on it being nearly worn away, could not be made out, but the name, "Jean Vaillant," and a cross with the usual monogram, thus—I. H. S.—having been cut deeper than the other words or letters, could be plainly seen. This was the name of an ancestor of the stranger's, and he copied it into his book. He then told Stephen that he had come from India to purchase the old Mayston estate, which he said had belonged to their ancestor, and that he would soon take possession and make some improvements. Before he left he rewarded Stephen handsomely, and though the old sexton did not yet know the name of his benefactor, he seemed to think that there was something superior about him, and that his residence at Pendell would make things vastly better.

While Bob Cuffer was giving this relation, a gypsy woman, who chanced to pass outside near the door, was seen to become agitated when she heard mention of the name that was found on the slab in the grave yard; she then stood and appeared to listen attentively to what Bob was saying, and when he had ended, she asked him to repeat the name which the stranger had discovered. After this, she was seen to hurry off, as with the news, toward a gypsy camp, which was at some distance on the plain.

"Better or no better," said the landlord, "iv he cooms here t' distoorb us, it maun be at his own risk—we'll soon do vur un—an he main be glad to get off afore we lave un worse than Bob left the bailee."

"Oy let un coom iv he dares," said three or four together, "we'll kick the goots oot un." Half a dozen others made similar expressions.

"Keep o shut mooth, luds, oontil he cooms," said Bob Cuffer, standing out before them all, "I'll keep an eye on un—I don't troost un a bit; an' iv he's ony uv th' damned

pars'n tribe, or a friend o' Rockett's, I'll lay he woon't trooble us long."

A number of men from the Rook's inn then entered; more liquor was demanded, and Ned Bogg's eye glistened again while he was measuring out the fiery fluid. Among others that then came was Jack Clench, Bob's antagonist, a stout fellow like Bob himself. Both looked smiling and defiant, and they had a glass together, as if to certify before all that they were prepared to meet that day in fair fight. Several persons could now be seen around here and there with cocks and dogs; there was quite a collection of these animals. The day's sport was about to begin and all seemed eager to witness the usual scenes of cruelty and blood, quite indifferent as to whether those scenes of recreation should close with the death of a dog, or the death of a human being.

CHAPTER X.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN HEATHEN.

THE gypsy woman who hurried away from the inn after she had heard Bob Cuffer give an account of his interview with old Stephen at Pendell, went on moodily towards the gypsy camp. This was situated on a distant part of the Heath where the scattered trees afforded some little shade. The camp was composed of a number of huts and a few tents. These huts were much better than those occupied by the plodding laborers at the brick yards; there was some show of neatness around the dwellings, even a few flowers could be seen. Among the tents was one a little removed from the rest, into which the gypsy woman entered. This person was called Maheel, and was known on the plain as the gypsy lady. She was in the prime of life, reputed to be of superior caste, and might have been called handsome were it not for her very dark skin, her restless eye, and the sinister expression which seemed at times to disfigure her features, that were otherwise almost perfect. Though the period of her residence on the Heath had been but a few weeks, yet she already possessed some influence with the wandering people, and was deferred to by many. She must have had some means of support, for she engaged in no kind of employment, but why she came, or why she remained, perplexed even the gypsies themselves.

Squatted in a corner of the tent, was Zingari, a venerable gypsy woman, whose age was said to be over a hund-

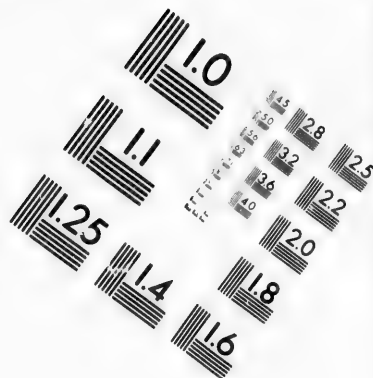
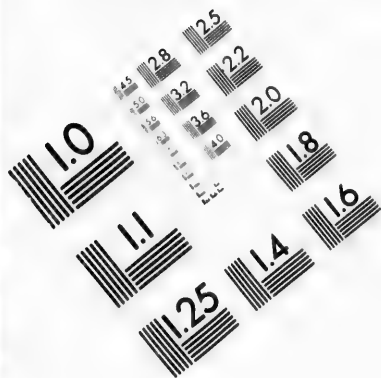
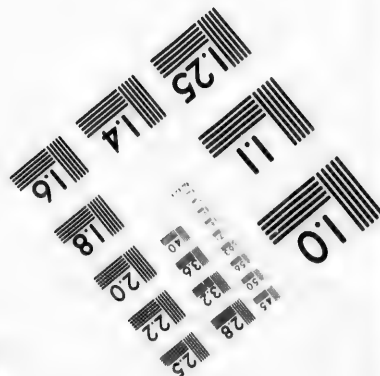
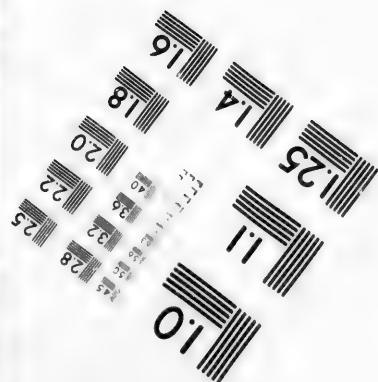
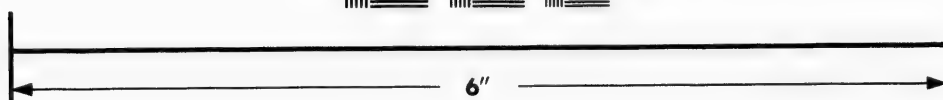
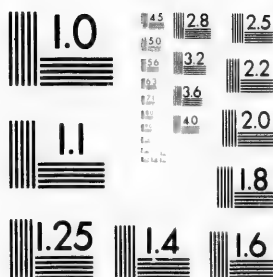


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red years. Her hair was perfectly white, her face—once perhaps beautiful—was wrinkled and sallow, but her black eyes were intelligent, and though now sunken, had even still much of the lingering fire of youth. The whole tribe regarded her with reverence, for they believed that none could equal her in dealing in mysteries and forestalling events; and certain strangers from the parishes would sometimes venture to call for such information as they believed she alone could give. It was with this old woman that Maheel for some reason preferred to reside. She was attentive to the aged occupant, who was however strangely reserved even towards her; and they had little communication with others.

Old Zingari sat knitting a kind of woollen garment, and while thus engaged she was humming a wild but melancholy air, to which the younger woman, while looking vacantly at the busy fingers of the other, was apparently listening; and though no words were heard, the air itself seemed to have a depressing effect upon the listener.

After some hesitation Maheel stooped and whispered a few words in a strange tongue. The old woman did not even look up, she became silent, as if she had forgotten her sad strain. In a few moments she slowly replied—"Better for thee not to hear my words."

"Thy speech, Zingari, will be now most welcome—thou can'st explain; besides I long to know what of my past or future thou perchance can'st read. What of that ancient name; to whom did it belong?"

"I know the name, Maheel, it is of one long dead; but there's a living man to claim it still—and him thou knowst."

Maheel seemed disconcerted and whispered to her again, and again Zingari replied: "Guilt breeds more terror than the whirlwind. Why dreads the worshiper of *Kali*?"*

"Nay, Zingari, Maheel will worship only *Christna*, the beautiful *Christna*, the son of the virgin *Devanaguy*."

* The wife of Siva.

"But Christna, the benevolent, is pleased with no sacrifice of blood, that cruel rite is for Siva, and for Moses; and it is the hope of the benighted Christian."

"I have no hope in such a rite, Zingari, my hope and trust are, like thine own, in Christna."

"Sayst thou in blessed Christna! Hath not the daughter of a Brahmin become a Christian and a Pariah? Better for her to be even of the *Devadassas* † in the temple of Siva."

"Why thus thy speech, Zingari? Blood of sacred beast or of human being I've never shed. My richest offerings are for Christna, who will come again."‡

"Believest thou this? And hast thou still thy caste? Stay! Let me see thy hand." Here the old gypsy took Maheel's hand, and after having looked closely at the palm, said: "The cross hath touched thine hand, not as an ancient symbol of our race, but as the token of thine apostacy. There is no blood mark here as yet, but there's a stain I see almost as vile. Maheel! Thou hast stolen the blood of the living!"

The young gypsy woman started to her feet; she looked fiercely at old Zingari, who seemed to heed her not but re-commenced her knitting; and soon again her humming voice was heard, and words were now muttered with the wild strain, as if of prophetic meaning.

Maheel, apparently stupified, stood listening at the entrance of the tent; and now, like one affrighted, she watched the shadow of a great cloud sweep across the plain, and onward toward one of the long sheds, in which several wearied children were seeking rest from the effects of the most inhuman toil. Under a sudden impulse, she rushed after the shadow until she reached the shed. Though stern and indifferent as she could be, her heart felt a touch of pity when she witnessed the sad condition

† Virgins attached to the service of the Brahminical Trinity in Pagodas and in Temples.

‡ The Hindoo religion teaches that Christna will appear again on earth, as the tenth Avatar of Vishnu, to conquer the prince of Demons, or Rakchasas, before the final destruction of all things.

of the overworked children. They lay around in rags—some almost in a state of nudity—and with scratched and bleeding limbs, upon which the dried mud was thick enough to crack in flakes. They all appeared to be in an utter state of prostration. A few of the more rugged slept; a few others were feverish and raving, while two or three were panting as if the last gasp was soon to close their sufferings. One boy, of about ten years, lay upon his back, his eyes were bloodshot, and now and then he would throw out his arms and cry pitifully for water. Near to him, a girl, scarcely his age, was huddled under a few rags, and lay quite still. Maheel looked at several of the little faces, as if anxious to recognize some one she knew; but the withered expression upon all had made every face strange. Once or twice she made bare an arm, as if to discover some mark, but each arm was too unclean or too much scratched or bruised to leave any ordinary mark distinguishable. She then approached the sleeping girl, and gently uncovered her face. She gazed a moment like one terror-stricken, and then shrieked and started back—the poor girl was dead.

As Maheel turned to leave the wretched place, she saw a little boy, who had just entered, stoop to wet the parched lips of the one who had been crying for water. There was something peculiar in his appearance; he might, at first view, be taken for some gypsy child, and might have passed for one, were it not that his hair was a dark brown and curly. As he held a dirty tin cup to the mouth of the boy, his bare brown right arm was exposed, and above the wrist, on the inside of this arm, a small circle or ring had been tattooed. When Maheel saw this, she grasped his arm, and looked closely at the mark. The boy seemed to know her at once, but without saying a word, she rushed away and retraced her steps to the tent of old Zingari.

It was about noon; the pious of the adjoining parishes were at their devotions, and the two inns on the Heath were well filled. The boors at the "Rook's Nest" had

drunk their quota; and those at the "Bull Dog" were not behind in this respect. Matches and bets had been made, and most present were in a fair state of preparation for the enjoyment of their usual sport. Already several stout lads, precocious in villainy, had here and there been testing the fighting qualities of timid bantams, and training the vicious young of the canine kind to snuffle and yelp for blood. All, however, being now ready for greater feats of brutality, an open level space between the two inns was chosen. This was the usual arena for gladiatorial contests of all kinds, and here it generally was, that men—even sometimes women—boys, dogs and birds fought and battered and tortured one another on Sundays, to win trifling sums, or to gain the applause of a crowd of ruffians.

A rude fence encircled this space or ring, and after a few preliminaries, Bob Cuffer entered the enclosure with the game cock which he had stolen from parson Rockett, and offered to lay an extra crown that that bird would beat any other which could be produced. A stout miner from the "Rooks" took the bet, and set down a cock much more showy than the one in which Bob had such confidence. The crowd had pushed and pressed to the very edge of the ring, bets were boastingly renewed, the birds were set facing each other, and the fight began. At first the miner's bird, being the largest, seemed to have it all his own way; the other, however, held out best; he tore the comb and feathers from his antagonist; and, finally, amid shouts and jeers, drove him from the ring. The miner was so enraged at this, that he caught his panting bird, trampled it into the earth, and then flung the dead fowl into the face of one of the men who had bet against him. Both men, being angry and excited, like many around, struck each other, and a furious fight would have taken place, were it not for the interference of some who preferred to see regular sport, and who did not want such interrupted by a common hasty quarrel.

Ned Bogg, the landlord of the "Bull Dog," now came

forward with his great bull slut. His coarse visage and blinking eyes were forbidding by the eagerness of manner which he exhibited. A slut of similar appearance was brought on the ground by Tom Slaughter, the host of the "Rook's Nest." Tom felt confidence in his animal, and had bet heavily on her, and his clownish swagger and sinister aspect seemed suitable for the time and place. It may be well to state that these respected landlords made it a point to be always opposed to each other; and more than one trial of bodily strength and endurance had taken place between them, each bearing some permanent scar to remind him of his adversary; and Ned Bogg must bear to his grave such a memento, even the loss of an eye.

The unruly crowd of spectators again pushed and squabbled in their greed to witness the coming fray. In a short time word was given, and the dogs were let loose. The vicious brutes rushed together, and seized hold at once, each one pulling and tugging against the other. Now Ned would shout to encourage his animal; then Tom Slaughter would yell louder in defiance. Now one dog would come down, but to quickly rise and tumble the other; and the struggle was continued for several minutes, neither dog seeming to be the gainer. In order to give them fresh hold, the animals were separated by a great effort, and the maddened brutes, chafing in their blood, could with difficulty be held back. Tom Slaughter, growing more confident in the power or endurance of his favorite, taunted his opponent, and dared him to double the bets. Ned Bogg, quite enraged, took him up, and shouted that his slut, if she had but three legs, would be more than a match for Tom's bitch, with four. Tom's jeering reply only exasperated Ned, who, without saying a word, took hold of his own dog, and, having tumbled her, seized a short iron bar, and fiendishly snapped one of her hind legs.* This brutal act was applauded by sev-

* A similar act was once perpetrated at a dog fight in England; the owner chopped off his dog's leg with a butcher's cleaver.

eral, and the yelling, limping animal was again let loose, and again her savage instincts led her to snatch hold of her assailant. As it was, the maimed animal made a desperate struggle, as if indifferent to her terrible injury; but the fight was too unequal, and after a few fierce, but wild attempts, she gave way and tried to escape from the ring.

All at once there were shouts and threats and great confusion; the din of oaths and foul language was horrible. The landlords and their adherents dared one another; blows were struck, and the two principals stripped to fight, but the umpire, one of the miners, a powerful and determined looking fellow, named Harry Tamblin, with the aid of others, kept them apart, and, for over an hour, it required the greatest effort to prevent a general row, and to get the excitement sufficiently calmed to permit the chosen actors of the next bloody struggle to make their appearance.

All were again in waiting. The crowd had increased; a greater number of women and boys were among the spectators. Harry Tamblin, master of the ring—who was resolute for fair play—had completed his arrangements for the next hideous entertainment, and it was expected that the coming struggle would be the one most suitable for the expectant savages.

Two clownish looking men sprang briskly into the ring. One was Bob Cuffer, and the other was Jack Clench, a noted wrestler from the mines. Both were strong, active men, and had that acquired swagger indicative of the defiant bully. They were stripped to the waist. One wore great, heavy clogs, and the other had thick, hob-nailed shoes. This was the usual way in which pugilists and wrestlers on the Heath were shod as a preparation for "purring," which may be explained as the dextrous use of the feet in kicking the shins, breaking the ribs, punching out the eyes, or exposing the brains of an opponent.

Harry Tamblin now placed the men in the centre. They stood at ease, with arms folded, and wearing a smile

of indifference. The restless, scrambling crowd were once more pushed back, and the word was given to begin. The two men then coolly placed their hands on the bare shoulders of each other, and stood for a few moments on the alert. Then one gave a quick shove back, the other a sudden side jerk. These motions were repeated, each man being cool and guarded. Then there was jerking, and kicking, and already their shins were cut and bleeding. They then closed and seized each other round the body, and tried to twist and hook their legs; there was more kicking, and from their knees to their ankles was a mass of cuts, bruises, and blood; but the men being about an equal match, neither as yet fell. Bob Cuffer made desperate efforts to throw his man, but his wounded arm appeared to give him some trouble. His antagonist seemed to know this, and, after several attempts, he succeeded in giving Bob a heavy fall. The two men were now down, and they rolled, and tumbled, and kicked each other with savage ferocity; and now the furious struggle began to excite the bystanders. Bob Cuffer was still under, and he clenched his teeth first in the cheek, and next in the arm of his adversary, and held on to the bleeding flesh as if his life depended on the firmness of his hold. The other man partly raised himself, and commenced to kick Bob on the side, breast, and face, while his particular friends shouted, "Noos thees got 'im, Jack, go into 'im, lad; purr his yed, do; that's a good un; smash anoother rib vur im. Eh, Jack, shoort a great un, purr 'im, i' th' goots. Hal he veels thee noo, Jack; go in, lad—that's it." *

The unfortunate man that was being thus brutally treated, still held on with his teeth, and Bob's friends would cry out, by way of encouragement, "Hold thee in to 'im, Bob, hold un, lad, hee'l soon give way, lad; keep thy moothful, that's a good un;" but a few more of the merciless kicks would have finished Bob, were it not that Harry Tamblin, who thought it was time to interfere, got

* See Note 2.

others to assist him in separating the combatants; and when they now stood before each other, the sight was revolting. Bob Cuffer was one mass of blood and bruises from his head to his feet. Three of his ribs had been broken; his left eye had been kicked out, and it hung by the tendons on his face. Jack Clench in appearance was almost as bad; a large hole was in his cheek, from which a piece had been bitten, and there was a terrible gaping wound on his arm, from which the blood flowed copiously. As the men stood yet defiantly before each other—a horrid spectacle—and evidently not unwilling to renew their savagery, the quick rattle of wheels was heard; all eyes were turned in one direction. A pair of horses and a carriage drove hurriedly up to the ring. Two persons were seated in the vehicle. Old Stephen's white hair and bent form, were at once recognized; the strange gentleman who had been driving, immediately sprang from his seat, and dashed into the centre of the ring. He got between the two bleeding wretches; he seized them both, and held them apart at arm's length, then quickly looking at them and those around him, his thrilling voice cried out aloud, "Are ye human beings, or devils?"

Was it the strange voice that had startled the young gypsy woman? Maheel had been out on the plain, and had seen the carriage approaching. Impelled by a singular feeling, she followed it closely, and as soon as she had a full view of the stranger, and had heard his voice, she started off as if in alarm, and once more entered the distant tent of Zingari.

CHAPTER XI.

JOHN VALIANT, A MISSIONARY.

THOSE who had been dwellers in the Heath during a life time of from sixty to seventy years or upwards, could fairly assert that they had never been more astonished at the daring of a complete stranger than they were at the conduct of the unknown man who now stood in the centre of the ring, and who not only reproved the combatants but sternly reproached those who stood around as spectators of the disgraceful struggle. The wild people looked at one another in amazement, scarcely believing the evidence of their senses. Many of them stood agape, quite undecided whether to act according to their usual impulse, and rob and maltreat, or give a death-blow to the officious intruder; while others around seemed as if awe struck by something which appeared too elevated and commanding in the stranger. One herculean woman who felt rather interested in Bob Cuffer, and who misunderstanding the motives of the unknown man, and under the influence of old hostility to outsiders, had raised a huge club and was about to strike down the unflinching mediator, but was held back by Harry Tamblin, who, though a kind of referee or leader among these people, was himself as much surprised as others at the deliberate manner in which the stranger proceeded after his first interference with the wretched champions. The wounded men seemed at once to recognize his good intentions, and they, as it were instinctively, obeyed him. He directed them to be

seated on the ground, and he carefully examined their injuries, while old Stephen from his seat in the carriage watched, like others, his proceedings with great interest. The strange Samaritan first attended to Bob Cuffer, who was in a bad condition, and like one possessed of the skill of a surgeon, he replaced his eye and bandaged his wounds with strips of linen or cotton now readily procured for him by some of the women. He next attended to Tom Clench, and with the aid of Harry Tamblin, who was now willing enough to assist, the two men were able to leave the ring. The waiting but suspicious crowd at last grew more satisfied; they had seen a generous act tenderly performed without fear or hope of reward, and after a while they began to think that the humane volunteer was neither an unfeeling detective, nor an enemy.

It may be here proper to give some account of this unexpected visitor. When William the Conqueror landed in England, among his followers from the French provinces, was one from Normandy, who had proved his devotion by many important services. William amply rewarded his true friends, and to this one in particular, he granted a large estate in England—the very one which included the Heath; and also recognizing his great merit as a soldier, he surnamed him *Vaillant*—Jean Vaillant. This appellation was readily adopted as a family name by the Norman soldier, and by his descendants for a long period; but in the course of time, as the French names *Tonnelier*, *Boulanger*, and *Meunier*, had become Cooper, Baker, and Miller, so Vaillant had become the English family name of Vallant, and has thus since remained.

Some time after the unexpected death of the Conqueror Jean Vaillant had been induced to join the Crusaders, but like thousands of other deceived fanatics who left home and country to attack the Saracens, he never returned from Palestine. His family, however, remained in England and his descendants for centuries held possession of the estate which had been granted by the king, until in the course of time, during a period of revolution, when trea-

son was rife, and when kingly tyrants and usurpers followed one another in quick succession, one of these royal plunderers had confiscated the land which had been given to the Norman soldier. The last of the Vaillants who had held possession was slain near Pendell, and the tomb stone which had been placed over his remains was that which had been discovered by the stranger—one of his descendents—whose name was John Valiant.

This last representative of the ancient family was the only son of the Reverend Henry Valiant, a Protestant clergyman. The Valiants, though originally Roman Catholics, had become imbued with the prevailing ideas which followed the Reformation, and, guided by the example of kings, bishops, priests and men high in authority, had changed their faith. The Reverend Mr. Valiant having been eminently pious, was selected by one of the great missionary societies to carry the gospel message to the "perishing" natives of India; and John Valiant, then quite young, was taken from school in order to accompany his parents to Calcutta. The Reverend Mr. Valiant devoted his life to the missionary work, and though he labored assiduously in connection with such men as Carey, and Ward, and Duff, and Martin, yet near the close of his life, which was prematurely ended in India, he regretted to be obliged to acknowledge that the common or lowest caste natives of that country—whom he had found by no comparison to be as destitute and as grossly ignorant as the same class of persons in Britain—were too much influenced by the superstitions of Hindooism to adopt Christianity. Nay, he had also found many of the learned Brahmins bold enough to assert that they could fairly prove, that the religious traditions of Persia, of Egypt, of Judea, of Greece, and of Rome, had had their origin in India, and that the doctrine of the Bible itself had been drawn from the great fountain of all religions, the sacred Vedas of the Hindoos; and he was also aware that the powerful arguments of an able Brahmin had succeeded in persuading even one of the Christian Missionaries to

change his faith.* After his father's death, young John Vallant was soon called upon to mourn the loss of his mother. Though now left without a single relative in India, he had, however, many warm friends, and guided by them he remained to pursue his studies in one of the principal institutions in the country. While here he became intimately acquainted with many of the sons of wealthy natives, who were receiving a liberal education, and he was surprised to find that though these young men were under the tuition of Christian professors, and had had many opportunities of hearing the strongest arguments which could be adduced in favor of the Christian religion, yet not one of these persons to his knowledge had ever changed his faith, or accepted the doctrines of the Bible.† Being a close applicant in course of time he acquired a knowledge of Sanscrit, and could converse in Hindostanee and other native tongues, and he not only became well versed in the sacred literature of the Hindoos, but had on many occasions heard expositions of the Vedas by learned Brahmins. He was familiar with natives of every caste, and was so liberal in his opinions, and generous in his impulses, that his enlarged views and benevolent disposition made him a general favorite.

Upon leaving college, he secured an engagement in a wealthy mercantile house, and through the influence of friends, as well as by his excellent business habits, he rose by degrees to a high position, and traveled as a superin-

* Missionary Roberts by Rammohan Roy.

† The Reverend Dr. Prime, alluding to the great Christian colleges established by Dr. Duff and others in Calcutta, and which "numbered nearly fourteen hundred pupils," admits that "these institutions are open to students of all religions, and the mass of them are Hindoos or Mohammedans. Only in rare instances have they renounced the faith of their fathers, while fewer still have become real Christians.

It is not the desire to become acquainted with Christian truth, much less to become Christians, that induces so many youth to crowd these foreign seminaries of learning. They are anxious to become qualified to fill the various lucrative posts which, in connection with the commerce and business of the country, are open to the natives."—*Around the World*. p. 215. N. York, 1872.

tendent through many parts of India. His knowledge of the country was extensive, and during the terrible Sepoy rebellion, he proved to be of great service not only to the government, but to many of the natives by his interference in their behalf. He was also at Cawnpore during that fearful massacre at that place, and while there, though he was himself in imminent danger, yet he succeeded in saving the life of one distinguished English lady, and the life of the daughter of a wealthy Parsee merchant of Bombay. After the close of the rebellion he went to reside in that city, and married the Parsee lady whom he had saved, though she risked the loss of caste in marrying a stranger. He lived a happy life with her for about ten years, when she died, leaving him one son. John Valiant was at the time almost inconsolable; but though this affliction was terrible yet his trouble did not end here. He had sent his son, then almost eight years old, on a visit to some of his mother's relatives nearly one hundred miles from Bombay, and in about a month from the time of his wife's death, the news reached him that his boy had been seized by some wandering Thugs—whose religion teaches them that it is no crime to murder—and he was tortured by the most dreadful apprehensions. Every effort that man could make to recover this child had proved unavailing. Nearly a year had passed in the search, and the only consoling information he could obtain concerning him was that a child, answering the description of his son, had by some means got into the hands of a Presbyterian missionary who was returning to England, and that the boy had been taken to that country.

Under these severe afflictions John Valiant's health had become much impaired; and the general sympathy for him was very great. Though he had been for a long time in the hot climate of India, its influence at this juncture upon his constitution was rather severe, and his physician recommended a long sea voyage. Such a voyage he found in fact to be necessary, for the familiar scenes which reminded him of the happy days he had spent with his wife,

had a most depressing effect upon his spirits, and a change might be beneficial. Besides it was his duty not to rest until he had found some reliable tidings of his son; and he made up his mind that in case he should not succeed in his search, to spend his wealth, which was very great, in the purchase, if possible, of the old family estate in England, and to make that property available for the benefit of a class of overworked, distressed people in his native country, whom he believed to be far more destitute and degraded than any similar class met with in his travels through various parts of India.

In fact, the life of John Valiant had been spent so far in doing good to others; there was not the least degree of selfishness in his nature. Were he the father of half a dozen sons, he would not, for the sole purpose of enriching them, or to secure for them a life of sluggish ease—as wealthy ecclesiastics and many rich Christians are wont to do—forget his common relationship to mankind. From his heart he pitied the children of others, who were forced to face a life of poverty and hardship; and he did all he could to smooth their rugged way. His theory was; that poverty could not prevail to any great extent, were it not for the general grasping and cupidity of many of the great and the wealthy. He believed that monopoly of the land—the present old established system—was but robbery, and that any government which secured vast tracts of real estate, either by grant or by purchase, to one individual, did so at the expense of the natural rights of others. He was of the opinion that the earth was the common property of all, and that every person was entitled to that certain portion of land, sufficient to cultivate for his own sustenance, or for that of his family—and to that portion only; that by such a distribution of the land, and until a better system prevailed, all who were able and willing to work, would be comparatively independent and secure from poverty; the aged, the sickly, and the infirm, he claimed, should be supported by the State, as children would be supported by a kind parent. He also considered

that so-called existing rights, which interfered with the equitable apportionment of land, were but existing wrongs which legislation should abolish as speedily as possible. It was even his conviction that as nations found it necessary to secure a balance of power among rulers, and were unwilling to permit any one government to acquire too many possessions, or attain too extended an influence; so, in order to prevent mercantile monopoly, or social tyranny, individuals should be limited as to the amount of wealth they should be permitted to accumulate. He would often say, that were the claims of Justice but fully granted, the labor of Charity would be forever very light.

Though John Valiant had peculiar notions on the subject of religion, and though perfectly tolerant to all, he had given no aid toward the erection of churches or temples, or places of worship of any kind; yet he was a patron of schools, of colleges, of hospitals and of asylums. Charitable associations had been formed by him, and there was not a benevolent institution within his reach which had not been benefitted by his ready munificence. So highly was he esteemed, that in more than one of these places his portrait could be seen in the most conspicuous position—the readily recognized, well-built, middle-sized man; the brown hair; the high forehead; the blue eye, in which there was nothing stern; the large, well-shaped nose; the mouth, almost hidden in a profusion of soft beard, and the expression of the handsome face pleasing and benevolent. The portrait was not only respected by high caste natives, but revered by many an humble pariah.

It might be truly said, that there was a day of sorrow in Bombay when John Valiant was about to take his departure from that city. Representatives of all classes, Hindoos, Parsees, Mohammedans, Indo-Britons and others, the great and the humble, flocked to the spacious harbor to take leave of one who had worthily gained the name of being a public benefactor. Hundreds of the poorer people, whom he had served without distinction, lined the shore, and soon singled out the vessel in which

he had embarked. They watched the anchors as they were gradually drawn up, and the monotonous chorus of the sailors, as they turned the capstan, sounded to the listeners on shore like a wail on the waters. As the huge ship which was to bear away the common friend of all, swung slowly from her moorings, invocations were uttered by men of different creeds; and beseeching hands were raised to Brahma, to Zoroaster, to Mahomet, to Christna, and to Christ, that the beloved wanderer might be protected on the distant deep, and that no wild storm or disastrous hurricane might cross the fathomless leagues over which he had to be borne.

While a thousand eyes were gazing in one direction, the evening shadows seemed to steal down and rest upon the fluttering sails; the fading glory of the sunset appeared to sink into the heaving bosom of the wide sea; and as the vessel moved off on her lonely way, cheer after cheer was heard from shore and from ship. The deep boom of a farewell gun resounded along hill, and shore, and bay; and though sturdy men, who had cheered, could have wept, Hindoo mothers who could not cheer, were weeping; and little dark-eyed children of the East, who had neither wept nor cheered, were muttering the name of John Valiant, even in their mother's arms. Ere night had spread its gloom upon the scene, the dim uncovered form of one man could be seen at the stern of the ship, waving adieu, as it were, to the receding shore; and when darkness had at last closed around John Valiant, and had hidden him from the view of all, the most tender feelings of those of different nations and tribes—the genial impulse of our common humanity—were touched and awakened in many a heart, and many then wept in the shades of that dismal night, as if bewailing the loss of a true and only brother.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MISSIONARY AT WORK.

JOHN VALIANT landed in Liverpool on his fortieth birthday. The long voyage from India had been very serviceable, and his health was much improved. Though still depressed in spirit, he felt that it was his duty to bear up under the most severe trials—as such trials were the common lot of all—and to be actively engaged in making his life useful to others. Being of a hopeful disposition, he yet trusted that the dark cloud which seemed to hang over his future would be removed, and that sunlight and brighter skies would cheer his after years. The agony of mind which he endured in consequence of the loss of his son, did not, however, lead him to despair of ever seeing him again; it was the uncertainty of the bleak period which might elapse before that son would be restored that made the present time so dreary.

After an absence of nearly twenty years he was again in his native land. His native land? How unmeaning was the flippant phrase! The land was now to him as a foreign shore—a land of strangers. Whom did he know among the thousands that he met every day in his wanderings? He might have felt less loneliness in a desert; not a familiar face to be seen among those he called his countrymen. He could not say that he had a relative in all England, unless his son might happily be living in the land. If he had ever heard of one from his parents, the long years which had passed since their death, and the

many strange events of his own life, had left his memory a complete blank as to any information he had ever received relating to family connections, except what he happened to know of the general family history. Neither had he any letters or documents from which he could glean the least information in that respect; for such as his father had left had been destroyed with many other records during the great mutiny in India. He had, however, several letters of introduction, he had ample resources, and he had determined that after a few days' rest in London, he would re-commence his search for his son, and ascertain all he could as to the chance of ever becoming possessed of the old family estate near Pendell.

First, then, in order to find out who or where the missionary was that was supposed to have taken a foreign child to England, he had made many enquiries, and was advised to call at some of the principal Mission Houses of London. He could not tell the exact time that the missionary had left Bombay, nor to what port in England he had been destined, but after having visited two or three of these different religious agencies, he ascertained that a Presbyterian minister had landed in Liverpool from Bombay about three months previous to the time of his own arrival, and that the minister had with him, besides his wife and a little Parsee girl, a Hindoo lady and a boy about eight or nine years of age, whom she claimed to be her nephew; and that these persons had been baptized and were reputed to be converts to Christianity. This preacher, he was informed, had left England and was then in Belfast, in the north of Ireland. Mr. Valiant then took the name and address of the minister, with the intention of going to Ireland as soon as circumstances would permit.

While making enquiries at the different Mission Houses, the agents finding that he had resided so long in India, and had such a knowledge of that far off land and its various inhabitants, seldom obtained by strangers, asked several questions as to the state of that country, the con-

dition of the natives socially and morally, and whether in his opinion the great superstition which overshadowed the minds of those remarkable people was soon likely to give way to the illuminating power of the pure gospel. He replied that as a general thing the people of India were quite indifferent to Christianity, looking upon it as a religion far inferior to their own; that every nation and tribe in that vast territory seemed to be devoted to its own form of superstition; and that among Brahmins, Buddhists, Mohammedans, and Parsees, with whom he had long dwelt in India and in other countries, and who comprise over two-thirds of the whole human race, he had found as much integrity and kindness of heart as he had ever found among Christians. His answers led them to wonder at the extent of his information; and when he informed them that there were thousands of poor wretches even in London who were much more ignorant, destitute and depraved than any of the Hindoos or Buddhists he ever met in his travels, they seemed willing to admit the fact, but rejoined that such natives of the East, though perhaps actually more comfortable as to worldly circumstances, were yet more destitute than the poorest, because in their natural state unbelievers were under condemnation, not having ever heard the glad tidings of salvation; and some High Churchmen had gone so far as to tell him that those squalid and impoverished natives of Britain to whom he had alluded, were really better off than Pagans possibly could be, inasmuch as most of the paupers of England had had at least the benefit of Christian baptism.

During his conversation with the missionary agents, he also learned that there were not only missions to Turkey, to India, to China, to Japan, to the Pacific islands, and to frozen regions in the north—missions to the heathen, but actually missions also to Christian nations. Protestants had sent missionaries to convert Roman Catholics, and Catholics had sent missionaries to convert Protestants. Besides this he well knew that there were what might be called minor, or sectarian missions. These are to some

extent sustained by restless preachers who are ever ready to travel about and engage in sharp discussions for the purpose of gaining adherents to their particular views. The Christianity of Europe is torn into shreds by sects. In England the Churchman repudiates the Dissenter, who is solemnly warned to return to the fold, out of which there is no safety. Then the Dissenters, while declaiming against Church pretensions, dispute among themselves. The Presbyterian denounces the Methodist, the Methodist the Baptist, and the Baptist takes a high stand against all others. Indeed he actually found more hostility towards one another among Protestant sects in England, than he had ever found among heathen sects in India; and he also had reason to fancy that many Protestant fanatics would prefer to proselytize a hostile sectarian than they would to convert a foreign unbeliever to Christianity. On the whole he was satisfied that the money annually spent in the mission service—the large sum required to send out missionaries and their families, to pay agents, clerks, printers, and others connected with such establishments—was in the aggregate an amount sufficient to endow a vast charitable institution; and that the results so far, for all this outlay, particularly in India, were but very meagre. Missionaries had from time to time complained of their want of success, and had perhaps attributed their slow progress to any thing but the proper cause; and he gave it as his opinion that if the large expenditure, which he considered only wasted in India, were but properly expended at home, for the benefit of the British paupers, there would be fewer harrowing events to be recorded of the ignorance, distress, and social misery prevailing in Great Britain, that reputed land of piety and wealth.*

During his stay in London, John Vallant being desirous of obtaining information about Pendell and its neighborhood, was recommended to call on the Rev. George Morton, rector of Pendell, who at that time was living in his

* See Note 4.

city residence. He found the rector's dwelling to be one of the most stylish, and located in a quarter noted for its aristocratic pretensions; and the rector himself, as a humble servant of the Church, seemed to be in the enjoyment of the greatest abundance of worldly comforts. No doubt, the Reverend Rector, like others of his class, cheerfully performed much religious drudgery among the poorest of his people in more than one parish, and in his ample distribution of spiritual food to others, his own ghostly pabulum might at times have become a little deficient, and his pious hopes rather saddened, particularly when he mourned over the grievous secular destitution existing among those very people to whom he had ministered. Next to fervent prayer, the Rector might have therefore found the comfort and relaxation of a dip into fashionable life—by way of contrast—just the very thing to stimulate him to further exertions among the poor of the Lord, as well as among sinners in the sanctuary.

Not being able to obtain from Mr. Morton the information he required, the Reverend gentleman gave him a letter of introduction to his Curate at Pendell; and in a few days afterward he presented himself at the rural parsonage. He found the Rev. Mr. Meade the very person he wished to find—like a father, like an old friend—altogether most courteous and agreeable. He was delighted with the scenery of the valley, and had a dream-like recollection of the place; for his father, previous to his departure for India, had taken him on a holiday visit to see the ancient Manor House, on the old estate. What a difference he found between the modest parsonage of the poor curate—the man who worked—and the stylish city residence of the wealthy rector, who perhaps only prayed! Yet there was something so quietly beautiful in the surroundings of the unpretending house of Mr. Meade, with its white walls, its patch of dark green ivy, its quaint windows, with small diamond-shaped panes, its shading vines, and its climbing, clustering roses round the door way, and then there was the pleasant lawn, dotted with

trees, sloping down to meet the boulders, the gravel, the shells, and the ripples on the beach, that he would have readily chosen it as a model for his own dwelling-place.

As Miss Meade was absent from home—she had at last been prevailed on to visit the Rector's wife—and as Mr. Meade could not, on that account, well offer his hospitality, he accepted Mr. Valiant's invitation to dinner at the inn. While there, Mr. Meade gave his new friend a long account of the changes that had taken place at Pendell; he told him about the poor of the parish, the low condition of the wild people of the Heath, and gave him some important information as to the legal position of the old family estate, which he told him had been advertised for some time, by a final order in Chancery, and was to be sold in less than a week. This was indeed information of the most important kind to him; and, as there was little time for delay, John Valiant started that evening for London. The sale took place as was advertised, the land was sold at a low price, and he went back to Pendell within five days from that time the purchaser and sole proprietor of over a thousand acres of the Manor, called Mayston.

Upon his return from the city, he soon became acquainted with nearly all in the neighborhood of Pendell; he knew many also in the adjoining parish of Betnall. There was nothing like pretension in his manner, and many wondered that a person like him, the wealthy owner of a large property, could be so easily approached, and so familiar with poor working men, and even with children. He had already placed in the Curate's hands an ample sum to distribute among the deserving poor. He went to visit old Sarah Afton, and spent an hour in her cottage; and Sarah, as well as others, was loud in his praise. He sought out old Stephen Gray, and went with him to the cemetery—as Bob Cuffer had stated—to find an old family tomb. Next to Mr. Meade, he made a companion of old Stephen, he was fond of listening to his simple recitals; and as soon as he had decided to visit the people of the Heath, he took him along as his only protector, rightly

judging, that with such a person, he could win more confidence than he should were he accompanied by a score of constables, or surrounded by a company of grenadiers.

When the wounded men had left the ring, and when the excitement attendant on the occasion had in some measure subsided, John Valiant stood quietly among the people—the central object—as if scanning the faces of those around him. Not a word was spoken, and as his eyes wandered from one to another, he appeared to be in deep thought, as if anxious to read their very hearts. The calm, resolute bearing of the stranger seemed to win not only admiration, but something also akin to submission. The crowd gradually increased. One by one came to look at the man who had, perhaps, just saved a life—saved a man from being publicly slaughtered—and who had bound up the bruises and wounds of the unfortunate wretches; the man who, besides this, had the daring to utter a reproof to all. Yet nearly all who had heard that reproof, had now a kind of vague idea that it was deserved; and they felt that in the words which had been uttered, there was not one of anger. On the people came, young and old, from different parts of the Heath; even many of the Gypsies, impelled by a natural curiosity, hurried from their distant camps, and stood around the ring. In a short time, John Valiant moved toward the carriage, the people made way for him, and when he entered the vehicle, he stood alongside old Stephen, and appeared in full view before them all. The carriage was now quickly surrounded, eager faces were turned upward, and every one present seemed to expect that the stranger would say something before his departure. While all were thus waiting, his clear voice was now heard uttering this kind address:

“My friends, you have, no doubt, been surprised at my visit. I have but lately come from a far country, and, though a stranger, I was anxious to be among you, and to learn for myself, whether the reports which I have heard about you were correct, and whether the people of this

wide plain, are as wild, as wicked, and as ferocious as has been represented. I was cautioned not to come her because it was said that as you cared but little for human life, that as you could not be grateful for kindness, my own life was in danger. But you see I came to this place without fear, this old man being my only protector. I came to find your condition most deplorable, and to find that you have not only been badly treated by your fellow-men, but urged on to infamy. I came, and have witnessed your poverty, your wickedness, and your barbarous pastime; and, after all, though I have given you a plain reproof, yet you have not so far injured me; and I am now satisfied that, bad as you have been represented, that bad as you really are, your hearts still contain germs of goodness; that you can be grateful to those who are kind to you; and that you can be raised from your present low state, to become in time as honest, as diligent, and as much respected as others."

Here the feelings of the people being evidently touched, as if the first blessed ray of hope had just dawned on their minds. All present gave a long, loud cheer, and he then continued:

"Now, my friends, as I pity you all, my object from this day forward, if you are willing to help me, will be to try and improve your condition. I stand here as the owner of this land; I am the sole owner of this old estate; I own the Manor House, and the entire Manor of Mayston. This land once belonged to my forefathers; it has now come into my possession, and as it is more than I ever want to use, I wish to make it serviceable to others. I do not want to drive you away from this Heath; I want you to remain. I want to keep you all with me, if you are willing to stay. I desire to see this wild, barren plain improved, and made green and inviting. I wish to secure to each of you who is willing to cultivate it, a piece of land; I want to see each of you have his own cottage, and his own pleasant garden; I want to have a schoolhouse erected, and to find your children—and even yourselves—

learn useful knowledge; and I want to see you all lead peaceable, sober, industrious lives. I have had my own afflictions; it will lighten them to be engaged with you in this approach to civilization. Will you, then, friends, help me to bring about this change?" Cries of "we will, we will!" "I want to improve the whole estate; you shall have an interest in that improvement, and every day you truly serve, shall bring its true reward; and lastly, I want to see you and your children go out into the parishes, and to any other place in the whole kingdom, without being watched, without being dreaded, and without being despised. Now, my friends, I ask once more, shall we work together for this great end?" Cries of, "Yes, yes, yes!" "Well, then, be it so. I, John Vallant, am willing to take you all on trust; remember that, and remember the name. I must now leave here to visit the old mansion, which I have not seen since I was a boy, and I shall soon return to begin the good work."

The rough set, unaccustomed to pity or kindness from a stranger, now saw both pity and kindness in the stranger's eye, and wonderful to tell, many of the women—women who are ever the first capable of detecting those blessed impulses of the swelling heart—saw those genuine rays of pity shining on the stranger's face, and soon those very rays were reflected in the unbidden tears which filled their eyes. Other women present, burying their faces in their aprons, sat and sobbed like little children; even the stalwart heroine who would have struck down this benefactor, now hung her head in his presence like one condemned. Men stood here and there as if overcome by a singular influence. Some quite listless, others with trembling nerves and clenched hands—hands not clenched in anger, but as if trying to resist some mysterious power which was about to assert itself in unmanning them, and casting the very evil out of their natures.

Before he went away, John Vallant walked about the place to see how the people worked and lived. He went into two or three of the meanest huts; he entered the

shed, and he was shocked to see the condition of the poor overworked children, and he would not leave the place until he had obtained a promise that the sickly children should be carefully attended, and that none of the others should be asked to work until his return to the Heath. He distributed small sums among all those who appeared to be in need. Every woman received something, and every child had a little gift. To Harry Tamblin he gave an amount sufficient to procure decent interment for the dead girl, and necessities for the wounded men. Just as he was about to drive away, weeping women caught his hands and kissed them; and the eyes of many hardened men seemed to be moistened for the first time; and then as the carriage moved off a loud cheer was heard all over the plain.

For a few moments the people stood and looked wistfully after the vehicle, but before it was a hundred yards in advance, most of those present, as if by an involuntary movement, rushed after the carriage and followed like the escort of some distinguished personage.

After they had got beyond the limits of the Heath, many of those who resided in the parishes wondered to see such a procession; and many even dreaded a wholesale plundering incursion of their lawless neighbors. It was, however, soon evident that nothing of the kind was intended; there was not the slightest approach to anything disorderly; those whom they had feared went along in a quiet and submissive manner, and whether the carriage went slowly, or at a brisk rate, all kept together. As they emerged from a long avenue of huge oaks, the ancient Manor House, situated on an eminence, burst into full view. There the procession halted for a few moments to gaze on the scene. A slight shower had fallen a short time previously, and now a rainbow arched the eastern sky, leaving the Manor House and its surroundings a central picture in the iridescent frame, while slanting sunbeams shone through the vacant apertures which once held windows, and a thousand rays of the evening sun sparkled in

the rain drops which stood like gems on the dark ivy that draped the mouldering walls.

At this moment a number of gypsies who were ranged on each side of the passage leading to the great entrance of the building sung out aloud :

Oh welcome back to the ancient Hall!
The chief returns to its ivied wall,
Sure sign that the Manor now shall be
A place for the noble and the free,
The home of the Valiant family;
Birds sing aloud, flowers ever remain,
For the heir of Mayston comes again.

John Valiant left the carriage and approached the building alone. He stood uncovered on the threshold of the doorless entrance. Tears filled his eyes as he thought of the past, and he was almost overcome by his emotions. Ere he moved from the spot, those behind him were startled by what appeared to be an apparition. The old gypsy woman, Zingari, wearing a red cloak, and holding a kind of wand, stepped slowly out from an interior recess, and stood before him. A little gypsy boy that she held by the hand, had a chaplet of oak leaves which she took from him. She muttered an invocation in a foreign tongue, which John Valiant appeared to understand, and then as he bent his head, she placed the chaplet upon it; and thus arrayed, at the sunset hour, the heir of Mayston entered the home of his ancestors.

CHAPTER XIII.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSORS.

THE Reverend Mr. Rockett, rector of Betnall, unlike his spiritual brother, Morton, of the adjoining parish of Pendell, did not care for city life, but chose to reside in one of his country parishes where he could enjoy things in his own way. Being a fortunate man as well as a good churchman, he not only had the spiritual income of three other livings—places which he scarcely ever visited—but he was successful in securing curates to suit his own views, men who were willing to pray at a cheap rate, and to preach against dissent. Parson Rockett, though not troubled with profound ideas on theology or politics, or in fact on any other subject, had one particular idea, which though not original he himself considered important, and worthy of grave consideration, and this was, that whatever national misfortune had occurred in England since the Reformation must all be imputed to the spirit of dissent; no matter whether such misfortune came in the shape of war or riots, short crops or scarlet fever. The National Church he looked upon as worthy of the greatest reverence, as capable of being the salvation practically as well as spiritually of the entire kingdom; and he often wondered how it was possible for peasant, prince or potentate, to overlook its perfection, or to deny its paramount claims. The Pope he rather pitied, as being somewhat spiritually deluded; but the whole vile tribe of dissenters he held in the most utter contempt; and he

would frequently assert there was not a prison, workhouse, or madhouse, in all England, but what should be filled with the stupid, ignorant drivellers of hypocritical Methodists, sour-visaged Presbyterians, and sloppy Baptists. The ragged, ranting, reverend itinerants of these and other sects, he would expose to labor on the public highways; he would subject them to the most degrading servitude, or he would transport the whole contemptible crew during life to some distant penal colony. He once tried to argue with a Methodist clown, but having failed to convince, he took off his coat and fought with the "*Swaddler*" outside the church door on a Sunday, in the presence of some of his own congregation.* Statesmen like Gladstone or Bright who had dared to advise the dis-establishment of the Church, or who had ventured to tamper in the least degree with its temporalities, he would hang at once to the highest tree; and were he to have his own way, no man in Great Britain or Ireland, should enter a university, or be a legislator, lawyer, physician or teacher; or hold any office high or low unless he was willing to subscribe to the *Thirty-nine Articles*, and to solemnly swear that the same were the very essence of truth. Subscribe to these same articles, and no matter what little peccadilloes one might commit, no matter what natural frailties men or monarchs—monarchs were always more than men in his estimation—were subject to these thirty-nine church plasters applied according to rule, would heal every moral defect; these thirty-nine steps in the theological ladder would enable him who climbed on them to reach the very confines of Paradise.

There is no record among the latest accepted scriptural revisions to prove that St. Paul ever kept for the amusement of himself, or for any of his friends, either game cocks, 'ox hounds, or race horses, or that he ever drank costly wines, or generally lived "*fast*." It is however to be inferred from what he is said to have written, that at one time he took pleasure in fighting with beasts at Ephe-

* See Note 5.

sus; and he admits that he had derived a kind of grim enjoyment while going about making havoc of the church, entering into every house, harrassing and hunting certain obstinate men and women who had presumed to differ from him on some religious matters; and so anxious was he that all should think just as he thought on such subjects, that he stood by and permitted a man named Stephen, who had held heterodox opinions, to be stoned to death, rather than allow unlicensed free thought to contaminate the simple faith of others. But it is believed that after Paul had entered the ministry, he put away these childish ideas, and grew more moderate; and though he still thought that his own opinions were those that ought to prevail—for he was a true priest in this respect—he ceased to be an open active persecutor, and attended more particularly to the production of explanatory letters or epistles, which he must have thought greatly needed, as very few of the wealthy and respectable pew holders of his time were capable of understanding the complex doctrines of the new faith, until his inspired sentiments were added to what had already been written. Upon reflection many now consider—even many of the elect—that if Paul had a failing, were it possible for him to have had one, it was that after he had become an apostle, much of his old persecuting spirit had remained, much of the Mosaic animus which had governed his utterances in the synagogue governed his announcements in the church. He had been intolerant as a Jew; can it be said that he was not so as a Christian? Some have also thought that St. Paul is the reputed author of more than half of the present reduced number of books comprising the New Testament, he had another failing—that of being considered a chief scribe. Any way, whether he can be justly charged with these defects or not, it is remarkable that, since his time, the most learned priests and prelates of the Church have exhibited in their own lives these two particular idiosyncrasies, intolerance in disposition, and an itch for writing, as if it were actually necessary to have Paul's failings,

as well as Paul's virtues, in order to prove beyond all manner of doubt the genuineness of that apostolic succession upon which they base their clerical authority and assumption.

The arrogance of the priests of almost every form of religion seems to be inherent; and the terrible facts of history can alone tell of their persecuting spirit. That spirit, it must be admitted, has actuated in turn every Christian sect, great or insignificant. The most enlightened heathens and unbelievers charge Christianity with being essentially intolerant; and they assert that every persecutor for opinion's sake, from the early days of the Church, to the present time, claims as his authority for that most damning of all sins, the very words of Paul himself: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached, *let him be accursed.*" And then they point out how Paul is fully sustained by John, who wrote; "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is a partaker of his evil deeds." With regard to these threats from Paul and John, and to another text, which says: "He that believeth not shall be damned," the enemies of Christianity boldly assert, that nowhere in the Vedas of India—the most ancient of all sacred books—nowhere in the theological literature of heathen nations; nowhere among the doctrines of ancient pagan philosophers, can sentiments so utterly bigoted and adverse to freedom of thought be found; and these opponents also assert that the aphorism, "believe or be damned," can apply alone to the claims assumed for the faith of the great Apostle.

Not satisfied with the Scriptures themselves, ordained teachers seem to think it their duty to follow the example of Paul, and become scribes. If sectarian priests cannot manage to change the actual words of what has already been written, they endeavor to distort the meaning, to suit their own narrow views; and to this intent commen-

tary after commentary is published. The number of expository volumes that have been showered on bewildered believers since the days of the Apostles, is overwhelming; and contending scribes are still at work, their excited efforts too often producing wild confusion, or the open hostility of an intelligent class to all Scriptural inspiration.

The Rector of Betnall, though rather intolerant in disposition, had not, however, the other apostolic voucher—he was not a scribe. He had never written a commentary, nor had he even attempted the most feeble annotation on a disputed passage. He had often told friends, who had complained of his slackness, that he did not think he had ever written over a score of letters in all his life; and no one would, therefore, imagine that he could spend a week, or even a day, in the composition of a sermon, when he could order and obtain a ready supply of the orthodox stamp to his taste, for less than half a crown apiece, or about a guinea for a baker's dozen—even sometimes for half that price. No, indeed, Parson Rockett never bothered himself with divinity to that extent; he considered that he did well if he read, perhaps, once a month, a vapid eulogy of the Church to the few that might be in attendance; and as long as his curates saw to the collection of church rates, and succeeded in preventing any of the flock from wandering toward dissent, the good man's conscience was easy, and he spent the other Sundays in innocent recreation with a few of his particular friends.

It will, no doubt, be admitted that some ministers, though fortunate in having a sacred call, may nevertheless become frivolous and degenerate, and after all, subject to particular human frailties. It has been said, and perhaps with some degree of truth, that filthy lucre, or a love of money, has even exceeded the sensuality which has been charged against the clergy. Popes, Cardinals, Bishops and Priests, distinguished clerical rulers of all sects, in times past, as well as at present, have not only

been eager for power and authority, but greedy for the means of obtaining it; and the wealth secured—often by reprehensible devices—for churches, religious societies, and pious corporations, is in startling contrast with the stinted funds available for the support of schools, asylums, hospitals and other charitable institutions. Dissent now stalks abroad in fashionable costume. Even the once world despising Methodist has flung aside his low-crowned hat, and his high-collared coat to dress *a la mode*. This once wild piety is now curbed under the shadow of a steeple, and its preacher—now a Rev. Doctor—shouts no frantic prayer, but utters his classic invocation in a “metropolitan church.”

Parson Rockett, a tall, stout, well-fed looking person, being a rector, was of course wealthy; and like a sensible divine, he was determined to enjoy his hard-earned money. Few, indeed, can extract more sweets from human life than a popular priest. The rector was a magistrate, and exercised his authority with as little compunction over a Methodist or a Baptist, as he did upon a poacher or a pauper. He had a large, comfortable house, well, if not elegantly furnished. His cellar was stored with the choicest wines, and the strongest liquors, which his temperance principles did not altogether forbid him touching. He did not believe in temperance bosh. Did not Paul say to Timothy: “Drink no longer water, but drink a little wine.”* He had servants and hand maidens—to some of

* The temperance principles of one of the Bishops of the State Church may be known from the following remarks of a newspaper published in December, 1873:

“The Bishop of Lincoln, England, has actually preached a sermon in his cathedral against the temperance pledge. He denounced it as unscriptural. He said that it ‘undermined the Godhead of Christ’—which, at least, is rather a curious figure. ‘Then suppose,’ said the Bishop, ‘that Timothy had been a pledged man when advised by St. Paul to use a little wine for his stomach’s sake—would he not have injured his health and inflicted a damage on the cause of truth by refusing to follow the Apostolic advice?’ Moreover, according to the Bishop, the pledge ‘leads to lying,’ and ‘it is a deadly sin for Christians to sign it.’ The Bishop’s sermon, naturally enough, was quoted with the warmest approbation at the licensed victualer’s dinner in the Crystal Palace.”

the latter, it had been rumored, he was much attached; he had horses and hounds which had been trained to take a short cut after a fox across the fields or through the crops of a dissenter, in preference to a dash through those of a sound Churchman; he had pigeons and poultry which he fattened experimentally; capons and cauliflowers, which he devoured rather voraciously; and when he felt wearied in the study of whist or of Whateley, he found ready recuperation in a cock fight. This was, perhaps, one of his greatest enjoyments, and what he called "glorious fun;" and there was not a rector within fifty miles who could exhibit more magnificent game cocks, or bet with more successful results upon his feathered favorites. As the Parson was bound to be famous, at least in this way, he spared neither pains nor hard cash to get the best birds; and those of his rustic parishioners, who were ready to boast of his enterprise in this respect, would assert that he spent "more'n a hoondred poonds a year"—much more than the salary he paid any of his curates—"t' gat th' best gam bloode that th' coontry could affoord."

This boast was by no means an exaggeration, for the parson's mania in this direction was well known to his journeymen preachers, every one of whom was authorized to secure, by purchase, or otherwise, the best game cocks to be found in their respective parishes. So delighted was the Rev. J. Rockett, with the diversion which a cock fight afforded, that often, even privately, on Sunday itself, when his curates were authoritatively dispensing the word, and perhaps when the British savages on the Heath might be mauling one another, the parson and a few favored friends could be found in the large enclosed yard at the back of his stables—a yard with great, high walls—watching with delight the desperate struggles between two birds, and staking heavy sums on the result.

The Rector of Betnall was well known to have one apostolic qualification, if even his defamers would admit of no other—he was given to hospitality. As his table was always well supplied, he liked to receive stylish stran-

gers and fashionable sinners. No doubt, by such a course he perhaps thought he might entertain "angels unawares;" but as these are admitted by proper judges to be of different races, it might be difficult to designate the special region to which the rector's angels sometimes properly belonged. However, on a particular day, we find him showing courtesy to a number of peculiar guests—a few of the very elect, the ordained of his own church, with a bishop at their head. These might be truly set down as saints and ministers of grace, and the Christian ladies who flocked about them were no doubt angels—and bright ones, too, as the great majority of ladies of course always are; and never since the happy day that the parson conscientiously took and subscribed his clerical vows, had he reason to feel more elated.

The occasion which had called forth the special hospitality, was the triennial visit of the Lord Bishop of Storkchester. Great exertions had been made to get a large number of ignorant heretics prepared for confirmation; and special efforts had been put forth to get up a dinner fit for the Episcopal stomach, for his lordship's chaplains, and for the clergy and distinguished company that were in attendance. All Betnall had, of course, turned out to see the Episcopal carriage, the retinue, and the saintly person himself. Early in the forenoon a splendid coach, drawn by four glossy bays, drew up before the Rectory. How the country folks stared at the gold-mounted harness, and at the postillion, the coachman, and the footman, in blue and scarlet velvet liveries! The bishop—a rubicund little man, well preserved, was glad to see the rector—his reverend brother in the Lord. They had known each other in earlier days, and both bishop and rector knew something also of the particular thorn that had once troubled the flesh of the other before ordination had in a manner subdued old propensities and put Satan to his wit's end. His lordship and the rector had also, like many others, obtained preferment in the Church more through the influence of certain distinguished no-

blemen than in consequence of theological profundity or of marked clerical devotion.

As soon as the bishop had entered the house, and got fairly out of sight of the gaping crowd, he gave a knowing wink at the rector, entered a private room, and when they were closeted together, his lordship hurriedly swallowed a glass of wine, and then laughing aloud, pulled a small note from his pocket :

" Ah, Jack, Jack, what an epistle to send to your bishop ! Pon my soul and honor, if I were to publish it in the *Record*, the Archbishop would, no doubt, laugh himself into fits, and the whole race of dissenters from Dan to Beersheba, would, of course, rejoice and be exceedingly glad at the expose. O, Jack ! what an apostle you are, to be sure. What a *custos morum* among the clergy ! "

" Why, Tom—I beg your lordship's pardon for the familiarity—but let me see it, can't you ? Tom, what the dev—I beg your pardon again—but what is it, what is it ? "

" Ah ! you holy rogue, that apostolic hands were ever laid upon your noble skull !—read that, Jack, read that. "

The bishop handed the rector the few lines he had received a day or two previously by post from Betnall. It seems that the rector had written a short note to the bishop, informing him that everything was ready for the practical reception ; he had also, at the same time, written a note to one of his curates. Both of these billets lay on his desk, and, in his usual hurry, the note intended for the curate had been directed to the bishop, and it read as follows :

" DEAR FOLSON: You must get that cock by hook or by crook. Give old Marshall his price, if you can do no better. I'll have it out of him in some other way. One of those infernal scoundrels from the Heath stole the splendid bird that Hovey sent me, and I must have another as good. The bishop will be here by Tuesday ; send as many for confirmation as you can. Should any of the old ones forget whether they had ever received the rite, no matter, let them come on—we want a good turn out—a second operation will do them no harm. Nail the cock without fail. Yours, JOHN ROBERTS."

The parson felt a little chagrined at his mistake, but his

lordship, who was in the best of humor, did not keep him a moment in suspense; he drank off another glass of the excellent sherry, and clapping the rector familiarly on the shoulder, said:

"Now, Jack, no nonsense between us. On my word, if I had a good chance, I'd really like to see some of this rare sport again—quite harmless in its way. You've got the birds, I suppose. Can't you let even Vanscourt have a look at them before service; can't you, Jack? He'd be highly pleased."

There was no mistake as to the bishop's eagerness for innocent sport, if a suitable chance offered, but his lordship desired to be circumspect; his chaplain, Mr. Vanscourt, might go, but he himself could not.

The rector quickly turned round, delighted at the hint, and in high glee replied:

"O, Tom, you're not a bit changed—not a bit—the same good fellow as ever."

This hasty and rather familiar address incautiously blurted out, again bothered the rector; but the bishop did not seem to notice it. His lordship, though anxious to see the birds, and perhaps willing to have them tested in the pit, was yet reluctant to appear as a patron of such sport, particularly when he perhaps might be observed by some censorious Dissenter who would only be too ready to cast a slur on the Church. No, he would merely take a look at the game birds, and should they happen to fight, he must retire. The rector in his eager desire to amuse the bishop, really paid but little heed to his lordship's objections—it was but innocent pastime; he went at once to get things ready, and while Mr. Vanscourt, the bishop's chaplain, and two or three other divines happened, as it were, to stroll out into the yard where the cocks were being spurred for the occasion, the bishop and one or two of his clerical friends remained in the house, and watched the proceedings from a window.

The fight soon commenced; the birds were well matched and the contest was likely to be close. The Bishop like

others got somewhat excited; neither his religion nor his elevation to Episcopal dignity, had as yet altogether "whipped the offending Adam out of him," and he looked on from the window, greatly interested. His chaplain ventured a little bet with one of the clergymen on a particular bird; the bet was of course taken, and the rector even offered to back the chaplain's wager and give heavy odds. Other persons staked sums on the result, and by and by a few more of the clerical gentlemen who had remained in the house, having an inkling of what was going on in the back yard, stole quietly out to the arena; hostlers and men servants followed, and in spite of every precaution little ragged boys and laborers climbed high enough on some of the poplar trees that stood in a row outside the wall, to look down into the yard and see what was going on; it was to them as well as to many of the clergy a great attraction.

By this time the chaplain had become so animated that he seemed to have forgotten his clerical character. He was seen standing close to the springing, fluttering birds, giving an exclamation of delight as his favorite made a successful dash; now again, with hands on knees, he would stoop over intent on watching the battle. In the temporary confusion that took place his clerical hat—of peculiar shape—had been somehow knocked aside jauntily on his head; his spectacles hung awry across his nose, he had become, as it were, disarranged; and altogether the *tout ensemble* of his reverence was not then such as was strictly becoming the conventional gravity of a prelatical chaplain. Parson Rockett fussed about bareheaded, so absorbed with the struggle that he apparently forgot the presence of the bishop and the clergy. The other reverend gentlemen, with one or two exceptions, seemed to be greatly pleased with the sport, probably because the bishop appeared to be so delighted with it; and almost all in the yard were evidently so interested in the fight between two game cocks, that the occasion which had brought most of them together at Betnall had been nearly forgotten.

All this time there were people waiting in the crowded church who no doubt were under the impression that the delay in the commencement of the service was caused by his lordship's attendance to his private devotions, preparatory to the administration of the solemn rite which was that day to confirm so many in the faith.

If, however, his lordship of Storkchester and certain of his clergy derived any enjoyment from witnessing a forced fight between the wretched birds, those persons who had the good fortune to be in the church had ample compensation for having been kept waiting. Miss Esther Meade had promised to come from Pendell to preside at the organ, and never did the old walls of Betnall parish church resound to richer strains. There she sat like a divinity surrounded by silent worshipers, and every soft note that she brought forth seemed to be wafted away at once on a mission to the pearly gates. Was she, in the absence of the ordained, making supplication like a ministering angel for the people? If so, the strains in which she prayed made every ear attentive, every eye dim, and every heart swell with emotion. Her sermon was tenderly awakening, her precepts were gentle, and her petition was for peace. There she was proving her apostolic power before all, and working miracles for unbelievers, infusing life into dead souls, and melting sordid, icy hearts by her grand skill in the sublime mystery of music. What ordination could bestow such gifts? and what virtue could emanate from tawdry mitres or crosiers, from formal rituals, or ecclesiastical display, equal to that which she drew forth from the chastity of soft, sweet sounds?

There was a hush in the church when she raised her fingers from her last prayer; and then silence was the worship offered to the Great Supreme. But soon a hundred eyes were lifted to where she sat; one person, more than all others, seemed to be lost in admiration; this was the Rev. Mr. Morton, rector of Pendell; he was still most attentive to Miss Meade, and would not lose sight of her for the society of a bishop. He stood robed inside the

altar railing, and intently gazing on the fair preacher in the organ gallery. The Rev. Mr. Meade, his curate, similarly attired, sat submissively behind him, speculating upon the nature of spiritual gifts, and doubting whether the most pretentious priest could excel his daughter's simple power over human hearts. A great number of smartly dressed young people awaiting confirmation seemed to have grown devoutly thoughtful for the first time; and a venerable couple who were seated in a retired corner looked as if desirous of leaving "this vale of tears" for the heaven that was then present to their imagination. It was old Stephen Gray and Sarah Afton who sat side by side. Old Sarah with pensive aspect was perhaps thinking of the dreary past, while Stephen, with suffused eyes, seemed full of hope. He looked tenderly at her who was near him, and then gratefully up at his other angel, Esther Meade, and then he wondered in his simplicity how *she* came to be able to make people weep; he wondered where music had its birth; and then again he wondered whether when the troubles of this life were all over, Sarah and he should be welcomed by strains so heavenly when they greeted each other on their happy arrival in the beautiful land of the blest.

CHAPTER XIV.

CLERICAL THAUMATURGY.

THOSE experienced in religious matters assert that the change from nature to grace is one of the most remarkable. Old things are said to have passed away, and all things to have become new. That is to say, the gross desires which a man is said to have as a worldling are relinquished for the more elevated and spiritual enjoyments which a lively faith is presumed to bestow. It would be auspicious indeed were this change as lasting as it is pronounced to be beneficial; but unhappily it is too evanescent. Men in all ages have become religious enthusiasts for a time, and persons of all creeds who have become disgusted with the things of time and sense—disappointed with expectation—have generally, after longer or shorter periods of religious devotion, returned to the world and to its so-called pomps and vanities, to its pleasures or its engrossing cares.

Strange as it may seem no class of men have been more frail, and more erring in religious consistency, than priests themselves. Though they undoubtedly regard heaven as the realization of their fondest hopes, yet the honors and emoluments of earth have been sufficiently attractive to eclipse, even for a time, the glories of the celestial home; leaving them like ordinary beings, to wander wistfully through the fading beauty and splendor of this sinful planet; and while preaching to others they themselves may too often become as castaways.

Among the Brahmins, where are said to be found the most ancient of all clergy, a man is born to the priestly order, and is consecrated, as it were, sacred by inheritance, and the Jews, like other nations, copying from India and from Egypt, had their Aaronic priesthood. Among Christians, however, there is no such royal road to the favored position, and one must prepare for the pulpit as he would prepare, in many respects, for any other profession; but somehow candidates for the altar are always ready to give a guarantee for the sincerity of their intentions by asserting that they have an irresistible desire to enter the ministry—not of course for pecuniary gain—but to sound the glad tidings; and to establish the purity of their motives in the eyes of the world, they are prepared to solemnly swear or declare before ordination, that they are called by the Holy Spirit to go like apostles into the highways and byways to preach the gospel to perishing sinners, and to try and induce men every where to repent and to be born again.

This idea of a "regeneration"—a peculiar scriptural term—had its origin in the metempsychosis of Paganism, and as the Hindoo doctrine of the transmigration of souls is, perhaps, among the most ancient of all religious conceptions, this idea has been adopted by the writers of the gospels, in order to illustrate the apostolic meaning of the new birth from original sin to righteousness; and every Christian preacher, from the lordly Archbishop down to the most insignificant dissenter, is presumed to be a "new creature," is expected to have been "born again," and to be in actual possession of this great credential before he undertakes to venture out into the dark places of the earth to add "seals to his ministry."

Well, if we find ordained heads, after asseverations so solemn, recklessly flinging aside the assumed garb of sanctity and giving evidence of the grossest sensual desires; if we find a majority of the priests of almost every sect anxious to heap up wealth, and thinking too lightly of the prevailing poverty among thousands of their fellow crea-

tures; if we find these clerical backsliders, forgetful of their own short comings, still calling on others to repent, what description of confidence can be placed in their sincerity? If other sinners, after ineffectual struggles to get rid of secular entanglements, resign themselves with apparent indifference to the gloomy future that may await them, what should be the hopeless condition of wanton reverends and unfaithful stewards? Pshaw! What care they? Look at their manner of life; the luxuries most of them enjoy; they revel in sweets, while many a starving member of the flock is languishing and despondent. What care most of these consecrated gourmonds for daily or hourly insinuations against them? What care they for charges against character and conduct too often only timidly urged? They boldly proclaim them calumnies! They denounce the motives of a doubting Thomas, and rise to insulted innocence, well knowing that so long as they have the confiding and devoted Annas, and Marthas, and Marys of the Church to advocate their cause, and to resent unholy imputations, submission must eventually follow. These are the living refutations priests bring forward; these are the telling facts which win back confidence, such are the appeals which the most eloquent accuser cannot withstand. No wonder that clerical corruption has so often to be overlooked, for, as it is, the secret of priestly power may no doubt be attributed in many cases to female influence; and experience has proved, time after time, that the wily pastor may too often derive his greatest strength and assurance from the weakness of credulous, affectionate, unsuspecting woman.

There are said to be angels in heaven who surround the celestial throne, and whose hosannas to the Great Supreme ascend for ever and ever. We know that there are angels on the earth who flutter around every temple, who fling sunshine into every place of worship, and who illuminate every altar; they sing the praises of their priest and prophet, and the grandest cathedral would be gloomy without their presence. These are the radiant visitants

that win men to devotion ; these are the glowing texts that teach the heart ; these are the evangelists that have given saints to every age ; and the sternest precepts delivered in the most formal tone of authority, would find many unbelieving ears, were it not that the harshest maxims are moulded into music, and rendered into melody, and echoed back to men's souls, by these beautiful angels of the temple.

The aspect of the bishop and the clergy, as they entered the church, was the very picture of humble piety. What a sudden change was here ! The display of meekness was admirable. The Right Reverend, ample lawn sleeves, with bent head, and gloved hands crossed on his breast, preceded by his verger, with silver wand, and followed by about a dozen of the clergy in robes, marched slowly up the aisle, while the organ poured forth a strain that was, at intervals, sublime beyond conception. Lo ! what divinity doth hedge in these apostolic ones. See the veneration they draw out on people's faces ! Wonderful conjuration ! The nobles and the gentry present look with pride upon these distinguished ambassadors of the Church, and upon the Church itself as being perhaps the most celebrated prop of Britain's national greatness. What confidence, enthusiastic credulity ! Are these common, ignorant gazers—the *plebs rustica et urbana*—who stand behind, impressed with the benefit of a State religion, or of any other religion ; do they share this same enthusiasm ? Can there possibly be a doubt of the tendency of their crude ideas relative to ecclesiasticism ? Are they growing irreverent ? Time may perhaps soon tell. Quaint revolutionary notions often generate and mature in the brain of a ploughman, that would be quickly stunted and withered under the mitre of the bishop. This may be an age of retrogression, for somehow the inspired conceptions of the Church are becoming stale and obsolete. Strange ! what can be the reason ? it is to be feared that thought is at the root of the matter, and that the towering cedars of our orthodox Lebanon, after centuries of

costly experimental culture, are getting sapless and withered. The Church admits that the age of miracles is past; it has no more to offer, and the moonlight visions of modern saints fade away in the day dawn. Delusion is dead to many; and priests who have been "overshadowing" truth in their secret places, begin to discover that skepticism has its birthplace upon the very steps of the altar.

His lordship of Storkchester, when seated upon his Episcopal throne, might be deemed a study for a dramatist; he tried to look like a man who had not a shilling beyond what would pay for his breakfast; and his reverend escort, like fishermen who had been toiling out all night, and had caught nothing. Amiable deceivers! Yet who, at this solemn moment, could think that this same humble bishop had an income, derived solely from his spiritual legerdemain, of over £10,000 a year—actually more than the united endowments of all the public charities and hospitals in the parish? Who could believe that this one man could earn more by his Episcopal trade in one day, than many a poor, honest toiler could earn by hard work during a whole year? Who could fancy that this bishop, and these wealthy rectors were, by a pious figure of speech, called "despised followers of the cross." Despised indeed? what a farce! and that these poor submissive curates, who had the same ordination as the most affluent clergy, are obliged to preach and appear respectable on a paltry allowance, scarcely beyond the ordinary earnings of a traveling tinker. What a fountain of purity and justice is this State Church! What gushing pity and charity swell out the lordly bosoms of its clerical magnates! Alas! it seems that ecclesiastical elevation has not always a tendency to expand the kindest impulses of our nature. Bishops are generally as sordid as common men; they mostly keep all they get. The poor are seldom benefitted by the death of a wealthy divine. Practical bequests are mostly for relatives; as if gold gained by the gospel should not be distributed outside of the Aaronic household.

After the ceremony of confirmation was over, the bishop delivered a very feeling charge to those upon whom he had just laid his Episcopal hands, and all seemed to be wonderfully edified, as if some prelatial or spiritual virtue had been imparted by the mere touch of a true successor of the Apostles. Imagination has wrought many a miracle; it may have still as much to do in curing a moral evil by the touch of a bishop, as it formerly had in curing a physical evil by the touch of a king. Any way, to all appearance, several persons looked more meet for heaven since the bishop had pronounced his cabalistic words, than they were before the service had commenced; and then, after his lordship had bestowed his solemn benediction upon the retiring congregation, the greater number of those who had recorded their Christian vows, hurried off to a neighboring barn to feast, and to dance, and to have a merry time during the remainder of the day *—the rector and some of the gentry having given an amount sufficient to furnish the items requisite and proper for this peculiar festival.

Shortly afterwards, the bishop entered the vestry in order to receive a formal address from the most distinguished among the laity of the parish. His reply was most touching and affectionate, reminding many of St. Paul's concluding words in his first Epistle to the Corinthians; and though he tearfully said: "Greet ye one another with a holy kiss," he, like a faithful pastor, warned them at the same time in these words: "If any man love not the Lord, let him be anathema maranatha."

When the oration was ended, his lordship, the clergy, and a select number of invited guests, were to dine at Parson Rockett's. The rector, of course, spared neither pains nor expense to get up something suitable for the great occasion. It was rather an exclusive affair—no ladies were present—the dinner was all that the greatest epicure could desire; the wines were such as to satisfy the taste of

* A common "wind-up," after Confirmation, in many parts of England.

the most fastidious *bon vivant*, and as soon as some of the reverend guests had been sufficiently stimulated, diffidence gave way, and the boldest opinions were ventured—even in the august presence of a bishop—on many of the prominent political, religious, and social topics of the day. Among the clergymen present, their ideas seemed to be as different as their persons. Though, as Churchmen, they had all subscribed to the famous Thirty-nine Articles—conscientiously, no doubt—yet strange to say, there were differences of opinion, just as conscientious, regarding the Ritual, the Athanasian Creed, the mode of Baptism, the Prayer Book, and even the very Scriptures. For instance, one clergyman would alter and expand the Ritual; he would have rich vestments, lighted candles, incense, and tinkling bells, and make church ceremonies altogether more attractive and imposing; another disdained all heathenish show; he would simplify the service, and purify the Church from every thing Judaical or Popish. One would rid the Athanasian Creed of its monstrous damnatory clauses; another would retain every threat that might strike terror into unbelievers. A certain minister thought immersion of adults was the proper mode of baptism; another firmly believed that infant sprinkling was just as efficacious. One distinguished divine would revise the Prayer Book, and expunge from its pages vain repetitions, and every text from the Apocrypha, especially anything inserted from the book of Tobit; he never referred to that book, but he thought of Tobit and his sparrows; a story too puerile and silly for Christian ears; an opponent would not lessen the bulk of the Prayer Book for any consideration, that estimable book was compiled by eminent bishops, by some who had laid down their lives for the faith. Next to the Bible, it had his most devout veneration as being a blessing to the souls of men. The Apocryphal Scriptures had been singularly useful; for centuries they had been read in the primitive Church, and many learned and devout ministers, after much research, had asserted that these very Scriptures were just as much

inspired, and as authoritative, as those which had been retained. The pious story of Tobit and his sparrows, could, and ought to be, read with as much edification by Christians in general, as the story of Balam's ass, or that of Jonah and the whale, or other similar holy and credible narratives. One rector, on the other hand, broadly asserted, that not only Apocryphal readings, but every discrepancy as to time, place, and circumstance, and in fact every statement not sustained by scientific facts, or not in accordance with the advanced ideas of this enlightened age, should be eliminated from the holy Scriptures; to this, another rector tartly replied, that were such a process of expurgation resorted to, all that would be left of the Bible might be easily enclosed in his lordship's snuff-box.

These jarring sentiments among clergymen of the same church, were very amusing to some of the guests, who, perhaps, cared but little what Church they belonged to, so long as it was called the State Church. The Rev. Mr. Meade, who sat near the end of the table, listened to the foregoing clerical remarks with some surprise; he had often heard similar discordant sentiments uttered privately, or in a whisper, but now they were boldly spoken even in the presence of a chief shepherd. And though High Church, and Low Church, and Broad Church, and Narrow Church, and no church at all, views were expressed with the greatest freedom, the bishop appeared indifferent as to what was uttered by altitudinarians, latitudinarians, platitudinarians or attitudinarians; indeed, his lordship seemed at times to relish the discussion, ready to prompt one or another with a reply; and he would occasionally enjoy a hearty laugh at the evident discomfiture of some contesting divine who had incautiously gone beyond his depth in a too eager and confident defence of what has been called, with a kind of reverential boast, "the grand old story of the Pentateuch."

During the time so occupied in polemical discussion, the bishop, though listening at intervals to his debating

clergy, was mostly engaged in conversation with his old friend and host, Parson Rockett, on the merits of the winner of the stakes at the late Derby; and he would become almost absorbed in depicting the fine points of the most noted horses of the day. While at college, his lordship and the rector had backed many a fleet courser at Epsom, and at other places, and it was still, it might be said, a matter of harmless interest to renew an old theme that had enabled them to pass many a pleasant hour.

"Vanscourt," said the bishop, now addressing one of his chaplains who sat near him, "Have you nothing to say among these wranglers? But, O! I know you are a sad skeptic, and you are glad to hear those fellows tear theology to pieces. Is that not so?"

"You know, my lord," replied Mr. Vanscourt, "that if the wolves devour one another, it will be so much better for the flock. You are, of course, aware that some of our leading modern philosophers incline to think that theology itself is a ravening wolf which mankind ought to hunt down; and in my opinion, the priests themselves are now doing the work which the people ought to have done long ago. For ages the Church, like Saturn, has lived on its children—devoured its offspring. But Nemesis has come at last, and now the Church, like Niobe, may mourn over those who have departed; over many, my lord, who will never return."

CHAPTER XV.

DOUBTING CLERGY, EDUCATED HEATHEN, THE MERCHANDIZE OF SOULS.

THE Rev. Mr. Vanscourt, the bishop's favorite chaplain, was one of those clergymen of the Colenso type, whom his lordship was pleased to call eccentric. He was as reckless in reasoning on statements in the "Sacred Texts," as he would be on statements in Baron Munchausen or in Gulliver's Travels; and it was thought that he was even too ready, and too impolitic, to admit the conclusions which such reasoning might force upon him. Still, while willing to be numbered among the clergy, and to receive clerical pay, he would pass many a joke at the expense of things called sacred, and would fain be taken for a skeptic, just as a very numerous class of persons who are in reality skeptics, yet lacking moral courage, would like to pass current in Christian society as being truly orthodox. At times Mr. Vanscourt would startle his clerical friends with questions which were suggestive of any thing but confident belief in the inspiration of the scriptures, and though he was looked upon by some of the clergy as an "oddity," and by others as a very tottering pillar of the Church, yet so long as the spiritual ruler of Storkchester was satisfied with his ministrations, and content to retain him as his principal chaplain, of what use was it to complain, or even to remonstrate? There were many others such as Mr. Vanscourt within the pale; and when prelates dared to write heresy, and distinguish-

ed clergy to print reviews calculated to undermine the true faith, surely the mere words of this favorite chaplain might be overlooked. Furthermore, did not this "eccentric" priest know something of the acts of the undoubtedly orthodox clergy that was far, far worse than heterodox words, and more contaminating than the greatest skepticism ? *

"But Vanscourt," again said his lordship in a quizzing manner, "while you stand in a pulpit and wear a gown, you must not hesitate to say something in defence of the faith. Some of our friends here try to make it appear that the gospels are mere fabrications from ancient legends, one gospel contradicting the other. Come, let us have a vindication or an exposition from you."

"My lord, I must admit my total inability to satisfy your lordship's astuteness upon points so dubitative. At best we can only guess as to whom the gospels can be ascribed. I am reluctantly obliged to say that these writings contain many contradictions which we cannot gloss over as Tertullian, Origen and Eusebius have done. Tertullian, you know, said that he believed a certain doctrine to be 'absolutely true because it was manifestly impossible,' and Eusebius would have gone further. But in these latter days we are obliged to give a more tangible reason for the faith that is in us. There is a track of doubt on every modern highway. I cannot assert that much learning will make men mad, but I am positive it will make them skeptical. Boys now laugh at the ogres that frightened their fathers, verifying the remark, that the creed of one age may be the romance of the next."

"Take care, Vanscourt, take care; if you must doubt on your travels and take it home, you should never bring it to church with you."

"But, my lord," returned the chaplain, "what a herculean task it would be were we obliged to try and reconcile the statements and doctrines of the original number of

* See Note 6.

gospels. If there are so many discrepancies in the *four* which we are blessed with, what a number there might be in the forty or fifty which you are aware were received by the ancient fathers of the Christian Church."

"Ah, Vanscourt, you ought to have lived in the times of these same primitive fathers. If we at this late period are so easily improved on as you think, what a field there might then have been for your critical talents among such men as Eusebius, who we must admit, was not over scrupulous in the inventing of so-called official records and miraculous legends, to gain believers. Pshaw! what was the real harm in that, if he made men better? You are too critical, Vanscourt; you would have made a capital Celsus."

"Thank you, my lord, for the compliment; I am glad you are willing to admit that Eusebius, and others of the Christian fathers, were not, as you are pleased to say, too scrupulous, in order to make their opinions popular. Though some of our divines still almost worship Eusebius, proof is now abundant that he dealt in wholesale fabrication; he would not hesitate to write a gospel himself were it necessary to convince others. His interpolation in Josephus, and his other pious frauds, stamp him as a master in the art of deception. Indeed, his motto might well have been—'*Vulgus vult decipi—decipiatur*.'"

"Vanscourt, Vanscourt," said the bishop, laughing, "you are really another Celsus. You make no allowance whatever for the pious zeal of the early bishops; they had to accommodate themselves to the superstitions of ignorant pagans. If our great apostle thought it harmless to tell a little fib, to make converts, some excuse should be made for Eusebius. Paul said plainly, 'For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie, unto His glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?' What can you say to that?"

"I care not, my lord; a lie is a lie, whether spoken by

* The common people wish to be deceived—deceived let them be,

Peter, or Paul, or the angel Gabriel. 'Truth is a pillar that can stand alone; it needs not the buttress of falsehood to keep it perpendicular, and some of those, whom we called ignorant pagans, soon told us as much.'

"No use, no use in speaking to you, Vanscourt; you are incorrigible. While many of our most eminent logians admit that it is still a debatable question, whether we may not deceive the vulgar if it be for their own good; whether we may not do a little evil that good may come; you would have straight up and down perfection. No such thing is to be had. Vanscourt, take care; I lately heard one of our pious ministers prophesy that the death of Judas was in store for you."

"Prophets, my lord, cannot always be relied on. Oracles, prophets, seers, and soothsayers, are now rated by many as nothing beyond shrewd guessers or common fortune tellers. Some of our commentators have been sadly puzzled to know whether any prophesies have been fulfilled. Appropos of Judas, I must now seek information from you. What was the end of this disciple? I would like to know what kind of a death it is which our clerical friend says is in store for me. One of our scriptural accounts say that Judas went out and *hung* himself; another account of equal authority intimates that he performed *hari kari*, as they still do in the East, that is, he burst asunder in the middle, and that all his bowels gushed out. Now will your lordship be pleased to enlighten me on this subject? How did Judas die?"

It is not known whether the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt ever got a satisfactory answer to this question, his lordship's attention having been called in another direction. Different subjects, by different parties, had been discussed at both ends of the table, matters which seemed to attract much attention, and one which related to the very strange remarks made by the Archbishop of Canterbury,* at a late

* At Carlisle—1872. The above remarks of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Hindoo replies, are an abridgement of those published in the *London Times*.

missionary meeting. "His Grace," in urging the necessity for greater missionary exertions among the heathen, was reported to have said, when referring to the danger which he thought existed by an increased intercourse with the great number of Hindoo, Chinese, and Japanese merchants and students in London, that "In our metropolis we are brought so near heathenism of the worst class, that, unless we take some steps for the converting of the heathen, *the heathen will be converting us*. For this is not merely an imaginary idea, I am afraid to say it, but I cannot help thinking that this great proximity of the East to ourselves, has somehow or other, affected the philosophy on which the young men feed in our great seminaries of learning; that men of learning have more toleration for that denial than they had in the olden times; that systems which have existed for centuries in the extreme lands of heathenism, are finding some sort of echo even among the literature and philosophy of this Christian country."

The Rev. Mr. Meade, who heard this extract read, was amazed at such an admission from the Primate of the great wealthy Established Church of England; amazed to find him concede the possibility of the heathen "converting us," and to find his logic floundering through weak expressions, such as "some how or other," "some sort of echo," phrases unsuitable for the capacity of a school boy. What! after all the treasure that has been wrung from the nation in support of the popular faith, after the assumed purer faith having been propped and supported for centuries by kings and rulers; after the powerful aid of money and sword; after the vast expenditure which has been incurred to Christianize such heathens; after prayer and the persecution of unbelievers; and after the Divine promise of support! What! all to be endangered by the too free intercourse with a mere half hundred of educated heathens; a danger of being converted to heathenism by the very people among whom, and for whose supposed benefit, we have been wasting missionary lives and missionary treasure, while leaving

British heathens—a class too ignorant and too brutal to be compared with Asiatics—in a state of the lowest degradation. O! your Grace of Canterbury, O! wealthy Primate, what an admission! What an inducement for the intelligent Brahmins, and Buddhists, and Parsees, to take your fears into consideration, to return missionary compliments, and to mercifully send over a number of their zealous educated priests to heathenize and elevate the lowest caste of British barbarians who are such a crying disgrace to the State Church and to civilization. O! Right Honorable and Most Reverend "Canterbury! O! prince of Lambeth! your pusillanimous admission should make you ashamed of your spiritual pretensions. After this, your apostolic twaddle, and your consecrated imposture, should be treated with contempt; you should be mulet by all Christendom, were it only to the paltry extent of one year's salary; you would hardly miss £15,000—(\$75,000,) and it might be far better thrown away in sending one or two dozen extra missionaries to India, than to waste the same amount of the harder earned money of the people by leaving it with you.

The remarks of the Archbishop soon elicited pointed replies from educated Hindoos. One, among many forcible things, wrote, that: "In these days of insincerity and hypocrisy, when men are paid for declaring opinions and propagating beliefs they do not believe in, it is not a novel thing to see the High Priest of the Established Church expressing opinions remarkable alike for their inaccuracy and want of charity." The foregoing part of this sentence was such a hit—a very hard hit too—at the position occupied in the church by Rev. gentlemen like Mr. Vanscourt, that nearly every one at the table applauded the palpably correct statements of the Hindoo. And the same educated heathen further wrote: "Such of the English statesmen and officials who watch the transition the Indian mind is passing through, and the rapid strides, intellectual and moral, which are the products of a liberal education; will bear me out in saying that the religious belief (if by relig-

gious belief, is meant a system which inculcates doctrines, of future life, charity, etc.,) of the so-called heathens, is as enlightened as that professed, (but not implicitly followed) by the class whose views are echoed by the Archbishop. These heathens have toleration for their fundamental creed. That no religion can be considered enlightened which is not tolerant, is a truth taught by history. We (heathens) infer from certain expressions which escaped His Grace that toleration has no recognized place in the Christian religion," and the same heathen further added, "it is as unlikely for the heathen in London to embrace the belief inculcated by the Archbishop, as it is for Mr. Stuart Mill, or Professor Tyndall to believe in the commonly received form of Protestantism."

And, again, His Grace was replied to by another heathen, who wrote to express the "intense pain," with which he had read the "unjust attack," made, "by the head of the Church on us heathens." "To the educated heathen sojourning here it is a matter of merriment to see the different sects of Christians keeping up an incessant warfare with each other." "On the other hand, it will do immense good to His Grace to learn, that the most of us heathens from India have an unmitigated hatred for those who, having it in their power to ascertain the truth, do not study accuracy, who do not care to read the works of heathen writers on religion and philosophy, and yet abuse them and those who follow them, simply because they are heathen, who have not yet learned the simple lesson of speaking without disrespect about the religious opinions of visitors to their country; and, lastly, who call us heathens 'of the worst class' for adopting the views of celebrities like Mr. Mill, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Darwin, Prof. Huxley and others."

The Rev. Mr. Meade, who had heard this report read by one of the Rev. gentlemen present felt that the remarks of these heathens were but too true; that not only intelligent Christians but Christian priests, do not care to "study accuracy" as to the position of unbelievers, and do not

desire to read the works of heathens or of infidels, just as if it were possible to come to a fair decision without hearing both sides impartially. He felt that priestly misrepresentations, though as common as ever against heathens and unbelievers, were, after all, but little heeded, while the reasoning of Mill, and Spencer, and the scientific doctrines of Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall, were receiving increased attention even when religious creeds and revelations were being declared illusory by the startling facts of science.

When the reading of the Archbishop's address, and the Hindoo replies thereto had been finished, the greater number of clergymen present, as well as Mr. Meade were altogether more inclined to applaud the manly sentiments of the educated heathens than to defend the craven position of the Archbishop.

The conversation then turned upon advowsons. Two or three of the wealthy rectors mentioned several choice places where capital livings could be had for a mere song, and one of these gentlemen just then happened to see in the paper in which he had been reading about, "The Archbishop and the Heathens," a number of clerical advertisements for the sale of advowsons, one of which was as follows:

"ADVOWSON FOR SALE BY PRIVATE CONTRACT.*

Advowson of a living in the south of England. Population 250, wholly agricultural. *No Dissent*. Fine old church, lately restored. Capital house, containing twelve bed and three sitting-rooms, office, stabling, etc., complete. Productive garden, hot-house, conservatory. Dry soil and mild climate. Good market town. Communication to London and all parts of the country by railway. Estimated value £520 per annum. Age of the present incumbent 66."

There was considered a chance for speculation and clerical call; only a population of 250, *no dissent*, the incumbent 66, and a chance of his being sickly. This was said to be the cream of all similar advertisements in that day's paper, and was pronounced just the thing for any gentle-

* This advertisement appeared in the *Church Record*, with others of similar purport.

man present who had an extra worthless stupid son to be provided for. Indeed it was believed that none of the clerical intelligence offices in London could furnish better.*

Alluding to this advertisement, an English paper, the *Birmingham Morning Post*, remarks:

"That is a delightful touch—"no dissent"—so courteous so Christian, and so expressive; as if one should say of a house, 'no bad smells,' 'no vulgar neighbors,' 'no vermin.' Then beside the absence of Dissenters, the living is otherwise desirable. Two pounds a head for looking after 250 people, with twenty pounds over, is not bad pay, especially when we consider the 'fine old church,' the 'capital house,' with its twelve bed-rooms, garden, hot-house, conservatory, stabling, and other appurtenances so well known to ministers among the early Christians. The age of the present incumbent only sixty-six, is a drawback; he might live twenty years longer, and then the purchase of this 'cure of souls'—fancy the connection of such phrases!—would be a bad speculation. Still the thing is so very tempting that buyers will no doubt come forward, and the right of shepherding and shearing these 250 sheep in the South of England will pass from hand to hand for a consideration like any piece of merchandise. We wonder what St. Paul would have thought of the business. But then in his day they didn't take the *Record*."

The clergyman laid down the paper, and, while the conversation continued, Mr. Meade took up another journal and glanced at its contents, and another advertisement soon attracted his attention; it read:

Clerical.—"Wanted, a Curate for the Warrington Parish Church, stipend first year £150, second year, £120. to undertake the whole duty while the rector is away, about nine months in the year, and to superintend the making of the rector's hay, etc. Apply to the Rev. W. Queckett, rector of Warrington."†

Ah, thought Mr. Meade what a chance this would be for

*See Note 7.

† This advertisement appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of July 30th, 1870.

me, what an advance on my present stipend but why should it be £30 less the second year? Still, however, at that, the income would be fully fifty per cent. over what I have now, and for Esther's sake I would superintend the making of hay or even make it myself. But then, again thought he, even if I should get this position, how could I leave my poor wife's grave; how could I leave the venerable church in which I have so long preached; how could I leave my old parishioners. Where would be good old Stephen's greeting smile in the morning, or his kind adieu at night; who could serve Esther so faithfully? Ah no, dear old Pendell, I cannot leave thee, and when my sun sets, as it soon may, I must rest on thy bosom, and wither away among thy autumn leaves.

No; great as the inducement might be—an increase of stipend by fifty per cent., and the rector absent nine months in the year, with the privilege of making hay—yet the poor curate of Pendell would forgo all rather than sunder old ties; he would still prefer to submit to the dubious attentions, and to the increased but hardly welcome visits of his rector, Mr. Morton, rather than accept a better paying position, and a curacy where his Rev. employer might be present only during three months in the whole year.

Other topics were then discussed by the convivial clergy, *Unbelief* and *Dissent* were blamed for the dissatisfaction created among agricultural laborers; "strikes" and "unions" were denounced. The bishop expressed himself strongly against such combinations; the interest of the landed gentry and employers should be considered paramount; and declared with some vehemence, that, "itinerant agitators," who speak in behalf of the working men, and who disturb their minds; "should be ducked in a horse pond;"* and a nobleman present approving of his Lordship's remarks, advised that all who joined a union,

* The very words of the bishop of Gloucester at a late meeting in England—1872.

"should be deprived of their allotments" (turned off their land) "giving no hope even of a potato patch."*

The question of the growing insubordination—as it was called—of working men, and the increasing spirit of independence manifested by them toward their superiors and employers led to a conversation concerning the lawless people of the Heath. The unfortunates were bitterly denounced as cut-throats and vagabonds; as benighted allies of republicans, infidels, and dissenters; and no words of condemnation were sufficiently strong to express the feelings of the Rev. Mr. Rockett against these violators of law and order. His position as a rector had been scoffed at, and his power as a magistrate not only treated with contempt, but the vile herd, ungrateful for his lenient exercise of authority in dealing with the thieves, poachers, vagabonds, and gypsies, that rambled from the Devil's Dale to prey on honest people—had sent some of those very wretches to lie in wait, and actually to plunder himself, as it was he was comparatively powerless against them—they conspired to protect one another. A bailiff whom he had sent out some time ago with a warrant, had been nearly beaten to death by more than fifty of these cowardly scoundrels, and though months had passed the

* The very recommendation of a "Noble Duke" at the same time—a dissenting minister probably alluded to the Bishop and the Duke in the following reference to an address—

Mr. Spurgeon in a recent address in his tabernacle took occasion accidentally to refer to the Warwickshire farm laborers' strike. He remarked that, in many instances, clergymen were blind leaders of the blind, and if a poor man went to a Dissenting chapel he was subjected to a kind of ostracism by the clergyman and the squires. The condition of the agricultural laborers was most shameful, and he had not rejoiced in anything more than when he heard they had begun to stick and combine for their own interest. He wondered they had not gone out on strike long ago. No doubt if wages were raised farmers would complain they were pinched. In that case the farmers must pinch the landlords. He had not a great deal of sympathy for the latter, for there were numbers who had their thousands of acres and who could stand a little squeezing without being reduced to abject poverty thereby. Negro slavery was nothing to the treatment of the laborers, and it ought to be denounced by every honest man and earnest tongue.

man had scarcely yet recovered, and the injured rector declared his intention of applying to high authority in order to rid the entire Kingdom of such wretches.

There is something in human nature which will resist oppression whether it be clothed in tawdry robes of state or in the most gorgeous habiliments of priestly power. The ruffianism too often displayed by a harrassed, hungry peasantry, is frequently the fiendish shape or creation of impotence against injury. And until rulers, priests, and philosophers, are able to satisfy the impoverished, why one man should be born rich and another poor; and be able to justify the great inequality of our present social condition, so long will men believe they have been wronged; and that belief will cause them to either unite in a resistance to oppression or to become degraded and dangerous; talk of natural depravity as we like, wealth and repletion may make men insolent and mischievous, but poverty, pinching poverty, is the principal source of crime.

CHPATER XVI.

A MISSIONARY EXCURSION.

THOUGH the Rev. Mr. Rockett, rector of Betnall had every comfort that a reasonable man could desire; though he was a favored priest of the Established Church, and a magistrate of the county; though he exercised much social influence, and might have done much good both to the rich and to the poor, yet he never considered it his duty to look beyond himself, or the nominal duties which his position required him to perform. He was hasty and tyrannical in disposition, and was certainly anything but a favorite with the half-starved people of the Heath, for his leniency was dreaded and his mercy was terrible. Thieves and paupers he treated alike: and for the most trifling cause he sent men, women, and children—many of whom were hungry weak and sickly—to the hard labor and wretched fare of the dreaded workhouse, rather than permit vagrants to wander about or to beg for a mouthful of bread; for this Christian minister had an idea—one perhaps not peculiar to himself—that a man who was very poor and very importunate, must, as a matter of course, be a very great scoundrel. So he had a ready remedy; he could not compound felony with a penitent thief—had he only stolen an apple; he could not conscientiously show mercy to a poacher, and as he thought a very destitute person or a pauper was a disgusting object to be seen at large, he committed all without distinction, and let the mercy of the law take its course—the only mercy he could ever show.

It might, however, be alleged that he had some reason for this magisterial rigor. Had he not lost rabbits and bulldogs occasionally; had not his garden been ransacked in spite of his man traps, had not his favorite racer been intentionally lamed; had not his harness been cut to pieces, and his carriage wheels rolled away; and had not nearly every game cock worth keeping been stolen from him? And the pilfering of the last fowl of this kind caused him to be greatly exasperated; and though he had not been lately troubled, by those from the Heath, he thought it was because he had been more watchful. Paupers he detested for their craving, and gypsies he hated, as a race of wandering superstitious wretches, whom he would exterminate.

Most of the clergy present had heard of the "lawless rabble" of the Heath and shared the feeling of Mr. Rockett against them. The Rev. Mr. Meade alone ventured to say a few words in their behalf—the only words he had spoken openly at the rector's table. He stated that the condition of these people had been lately much improved. A wealthy gentleman, now the owner of the old Mayston estate, had returned scarcely twelve months since, from India, and had determined to reside on the property. It had been said that the people of the Heath never could be civilized until they had been converted, but the gentleman, though he had not made any efforts to convert, had undoubtedly reformed them in a great degree, and he hoped that in a short time the marked change in their circumstances and conduct would meet even the approval of the rector of Betnall.

"Reformed, did you say? Why who or what can reform them or improve their condition?" almost roared out the rector. "I care not who goes among them, saint or sinner, 'twill be all alike. Reform, indeed! Did they not disdain the pure gospel we would have sent? Did they not afterwards try the spurious stuff that a few Methodist ranters tried to cram them with? And, even after that, not one of our curates, no, not one, dared venture

among them to counteract false teaching, Don't tell *me* about any chance of their reformation; neither St. Paul nor the Archbishop of Canterbury could do any thing with them. Transportation or the gallows, is, and can be the only remedy."

"Now I really think," said the bishop, "that here, even at home, right as it were in our very midst, would be a fine field for the exhibition of the Primate's missionary zeal. We have tried India almost in vain; we have had costly experience in other countries, and as the Archbishop of Canterbury is an authority, unless, as he says, we look sharp the Hindoos will be converting us. Glorious result after all our missionary efforts! Britain to be Brahminized in the nineteenth century. By the by, who is this new comer? Is he one of these self-same Hindoos whom our Primate dreads?"

"No, my Lord," humbly replied Mr. Meade, "he is an English gentleman who had spent many years in India—a Christian gentleman, I presume, my lord, who to my knowledge has already done much good and acquired much influence over the people of the Heath."

"Well, then, he must be one of the Archbishop's Hindoos," again roared out Mr. Rockett, "he can be no Christian. Christianity and the example of Christian people have totally failed to influence such fiends. No, take my word for it, the fellow is a Hindoo."

A genuine laugh followed this remark of the excited rector of Betnall.

"Strange, very strange," said the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt, ironically, "if Christianity itself has failed to benefit these ignorant creatures, surely the every day life and example of educated clergymen of our Apostolic Church, ought to have settled the matter, and convinced them, at any rate, that our form of godliness is great gain. Pon my honor, this discrimination is greatly at fault."

"Vanscourt," said the bishop, humorously, to his chaplain, "I've a great mind to send you over to the Heath to try your spiritual skill. Come, what do you say?"

"My lord, I feel myself, alas, too feeble for such a mission. The Gospel in good hands—in your own, for instance—might do much. We know that most professing Christians prefer a gilt-edged Bible to a very plain one; and I think that gold, with the Gospel, has made our faith attractive among heathens, when the Gospel alone would be rejected. The distribution of a little gold, or its equivalent among an impoverished people, might create on the Heath a wonderful relish for our doctrines. I think if a man were hungry, he would be inclined to pray for bread first, and for his soul afterward. Now, my lord, as you are far, far more wealthy than I am, and as you possess, of course, more spiritual gifts than all of us here together, I think, therefore, my lord," said the chaplain, bowing with much humility, "that *you* should be the missionary to the Heath."

"Very good, indeed; well done! well argued, Vanscourt," said the bishop, laughing. "Upon my word, if I thought it was quite safe, I would go down among these British heathens and see for myself. Of course you would come, Vanscourt?"

The chaplain, with seeming hesitation, spread his hands by his sides, and bowed acquiescence; and then, as if with a timid voice, replied:

"Where your lordship would choose to go, I dare not refuse to follow; but, would it not, would it not, your lordship, would it not be better that we here should all go together—all together, your lordship? What, my lord, were we obliged to fight our way in, and fight our way out among those evil ones? Let us all go together, my lord—would it not be much, very much better?"

Another hearty laugh followed the simulated fear of the chaplain. The rector of Betnall really felt uneasy at the proposal, but was ashamed to exhibit the least apprehension. Mr. Morton, the rector of Pendall, wished to plead some excuse; and other clergymen present, would prefer to enjoy social conversation over the rector's good wine or brandy, rather than be made targets of, or be

pelted with stones, or even hallooed after by a ragged, rascally mob away out on this vile Heath; but the bishop having expressed his determination to go, the Reverend clergy all seemed, like other servile beings, to comply with alacrity.

The Rev. Mr. Meade again ventured to assure his lordship and all present, that they might now go to the Heath with perfect safety. The visit might be the production of much good; his lordship would see for himself, and would, no doubt, be pleased to find so many evidences of improvement.

"By the by," said Mr. Vanscourt, "this intended visit reminds me of another singular contradiction which our translators must have overlooked, and which our commentators have as yet failed to reconcile. We are informed that an august personage, with his attendance, being once on his way to Sodom, to see for himself whether that city was as bad as had been represented, entered the tent of Abraham on the plains of Mamre; conversed face to face with Abraham, and Sarah, his wife; had his feet washed, and partook of cakes, milk, butter and veal—refreshments set before him; and yet, in another place, we are told that—'No man hath seen God at any time'—that no man can see him and live—'Whom no man hath seen, or can see.' Verily, my lord and Reverend gentleman, this is a singular contradiction; and I would respectfully suggest, that those learned and pious men now engaged in a fresh revision of the Bible, should try and reconcile these conflicting statements, or else alter the text, as you know it was common to do in other days; otherwise, we may expect a fresh brood of skeptics every year, who will reason and reason, until they make most people believe that religion is but superstition, and that our apostolic authority but mere empty pretension."

"Now, Vanscourt," replied his lordship, "if our visit to this modern Sodom is likely to be attended with danger, you had better suggest an humble prayer, rather than raise another skeptical hobgoblin to frighten us away from

our true faith. We want no more emendations; we have, I fear, conceded too much altogether. The Bible as it stands is well able to take care of itself without any of your suggested expurgations. But we must go among these wild people. I think it is our duty, particularly now that there is a little danger."

Mr. Meade re-assured his lordship, and stated that by starting at once they could be all safely back by dusk.

The bright sunlight of an early autumn afternoon spread its radiance over the wide plain, and the well defined shadows, scattered here and there, added nearly as much to the rural scenery as the light that rested upon the waving branches, or that flickered among the restless leaves of the scattered trees. Ruminating cattle rested in the shade, or stood at leisure by the road side, quiet flocks fed or lay on green spots in the distance, and the white-washed cabins—not the rude, wretched abodes that they once were—seemed to smile a welcome to the visitor, while tidy looking women, surrounded by playing children, sat with plying needle on the door-steps. Far and near in every direction a number of men were ploughing, and leveling, and fertilizing the long neglected soil. The deep, muddy pits and ditches had been filled up, piles of brick and rubbish had been removed, the long, unsightly sheds had been torn down, and much of the material used in order to make the dwellings more capacious and comfortable. The chapel had been turned into a neat schoolhouse which was well attended, the "Rook's Nest" had been demolished, and the "Bull Dog" had been well cleaned and repaired, and was now a kind of store house containing tools, implements, necessary supplies, etc., such as might be required by a busy agricultural population. What a change within one year! There were no half-witted loiterers to be found, none such watching or waiting to rob or abuse a stranger, no cruelty to animals, no brutal fights, no overworked women or hungry, suffering children to be longer seen; all seemed to be buoyed up with hope and confidence in the kind encouragement of one

man, and all seemed ready and willing to remain and trust in him. So far only two persons had become dissatisfied, Tom Slaughter and Ned Bogg, the once thriving landlords—one of the Rook's Nest and the other of the Bull Dog—they saw nothing but ruin to them in the changed condition of affairs, and, as they could not be induced to stay, they had left the place in disgust, never to return.

On this pleasant afternoon the most tame or sombre scenery would lose its gloom; the steady improvement of this part of the Mayston estate, in so short a period, made the once desolate Heath look cheerful and inviting, and as the bishop of Storkchester and his clergymen were driven slowly across the wide plain, he was surprised to find it so different from that which he had expected. His lordship's carriage took the lead; no wild mob threatened, no one with felonious intent crossed his path. Those working on either side merely paused to look after the carriages as they passed along, and then quietly resumed their labor. Harry Tamblin, who was now a kind of overseer on this part of the estate, happened to recognize the Rev. Mr. Meade, and he civilly offered to conduct the gentlemen about the plain and show them what improvements had been already made, and what were contemplated. Mr. Meade expressed his thanks, but told him he need not leave his business. Upon inquiry for Mr. Vallant he was told that that gentleman was then in Ireland; and though he had been absent from the estate for more than a month, things went on with as much regularity as if he were present. Every man seemed inclined to do all in his power to second the efforts of his generous benefactor, and it was a pleasure to witness the earnest endeavors all made to break up the hardened surface of the land, and to make mellow and enrich the callous soil in which their hearts lay; and in which they now felt that they already had, for the first time, the sacred natural right of ownership. Harry Tamblin seemed specially pleased at the confidence reposed in him by Mr. Vallant, and to all

appearance, the greatest union and harmony prevailed among those sturdy laborers, who, scarcely a year back, were dreaded by nearly all, as villains and outlaws, and despised by their so-called civilized neighbors.

Strange as it may be, the rector of Betnall, the Rev. Mr. Rockett, felt rather disappointed and irritated to think that so little notice was taken of himself, of the bishop, or of any of the clergymen present. A few civil words had been spoken to Mr. Meade, but nothing approaching an insult had been offered to the now defiant rector, who really expected—even almost hoped—that he and his friends might be mobbed or otherwise maltreated; they were not, as yet, even treated with contempt, nothing more than ordinary indifference, an indifference that was, at the time, more galling to the pride of the rector than a direct indignity. He was really amazed to find that his predictions concerning the people of the Heath were not verified, and at the moment he would have been better pleased had a dozen drunken ruffians waylaid the bishop and clergy then and there, rather than they should return favorably impressed with the place or the people.

The only persons on the Heath not seen engaged at hard labor, were a few gypsy stragglers vending little articles, or mending tin ware or other utensils in some by-place. These itinerants reminded the bishop of what he had heard of the gypsies, and he at once expressed a desire to visit their camp. They would then be among real heathens, and might he not be able to truly assert that this excursion was one of a missionary character.

In a short time they reached the gypsy camp. These peculiar people still preferred to live by themselves in huts and tents; and as the new owner of the estate was very kind to them, they seemed to be perfectly content with their nanner of life. The bishop's carriage stopped in front of the principal tent; Zingari's. The old gypsy woman was seen sitting under the shade of a large oak tree, a little boy stood near her; and about a dozen other gypsy men and women were variously occupied around a

few other tents close by. His lordship looked down with some surprise, from his seat in the carriage, at the supposed queen of the wild race, and as he thought this was a fit opportunity to commence his first missionary exhortation he addressed her: "Well, dame, we have come out here to see you, just to see you; I'm glad we've met. You have, I am told, lived here in this curious way for a long time, yet I've never seen you before—you do not, I suppose, know who I am?"

Zingari was dressed in her usual fashion; she was almost always prepared to receive visitors—for she was generally much sought after—and as usual she was knitting. She seemed quite collected, and scarcely looked up at the new comers.

"I know who you are, and we have never met here before."

These words spoken calmly and in a significant tone, rather surprised most of the clergymen present.

"Oh, oh,—perhaps so"—replied the bishop, "many of course know me whom I do not know."

"You know me well, and will never forget me," followed Zangari in the same significant manner.

"That may be, that may be, dame, but I really cannot at present think who you are."

"I could bring a matter to your remembrance," said she, "that might assist you."

"You probably could," he replied, "but 'tis of no consequence, no consequence; we have merely come here as a duty to give you our best advice and instruction."

"Hear him!" said Zingari, looking around at her gypsy companions, "who wants either your advice or your instruction," and her words had a scornful meaning.

"Well perhaps *you* do," continued the bishop, now determined to do actual missionary duty, "perhaps you, dame, and your friends here might listen to our message and be benefited, you are very old, very old indeed, and cannot expect to live much longer. You and your people are very superstitious, and you yourself, I am told, have

practised on the credulous; and without using a harsh expression, you have taken money from poor people for fortune-telling. Now my good dame, this is wrong, very wrong, for which the Almighty will hold you answerable. We now wish you to reform; we, as God's messengers, would pray you to abandon your error, and accept truth." The bishop's manner was calm and confident, and his seeming sincerity won looks and nods of pious approval from nearly every one of his clerical attendants.

The loud laugh of the old gypsy woman startled all present; even two or three of the gypsy men sprang up and ran toward her, scarcely knowing what they did.

His lordship's look was one of blank amazement, and when he saw the woman stately and erect, with outstretched arms before him, he instinctively shrank back into the corner of his carriage, as if anticipating an immediate attack.

"God's messenger!" she exclaimed, and her mocking laugh could now be heard away out on the Heath. "O! what vile assurance! what audacity to come here to see me on such an errand! Do I not know you, you prince of hypocrites, you arrant impostor? Do I not know ye all, you race of devouring beasts?"

"Silence! you infernal old wretch," now roared out Parson Rockett. The bishop quickly raised his hand, and with nervous gesture waved it rapidly, as if most anxious to keep the excited rector quiet.

"I will speak here, with the heavens above me," continued Zingari, "I did not ask you to come, and now you shall listen. Did you come here to have me accept your stale plagiarisms for truth? Would you bring me doctrines as original that were old to my race ten thousand years before the time of your reputed Moses? You have robbed our Vedas to form your creed. You have got your Old book and your New book—the Bible—a thing of yesterday; both, as you try to believe, inspired. Inspired? Why, they have not even the merit of novelty. Your old book is full of our ancient rites and ceremonies; your new

book is but a re-hash of our doctrines; our Christna is your Christ; and your new fangled creed of eighteen hundred years is yet unknown to three-fourths of mankind, and even rejected in the very land of its birth, and is so like ours that you have dared to assert, contrary to plain facts, that ours is taken from yours. *You* talk to me of truth—that which you have never sought for. You all chatter back like magpies the few words you have learned from your grandfathers, and you do not look further—you dare not hear both sides—'twould be your destruction."

The excited rector of Betnall was again about to make a sharp reply, but was prevented by a sudden look from the bishop, who now felt somewhat reassured, and he again addressed his venerable opponent:

"Dame, you are far too hasty, too hasty; we have the truth, of this we are assured. We do not want to argue with you; but what have you done to gain true knowledge? We are confident that our religion is not a thing of yesterday."

"O, yes, you are confident because it is popular hereabouts; you are assured of its truth because it gives you paying positions. You don't want to argue because your priestly presumption could be no gainer. No, you would prefer to lock up thought and put the key in your pocket; but this is what I have done to gain some knowledge. I have read that paper idol of yours from beginning to ending, from Genesis to Revelation, yes, every word; and what is it? But a mere scrap book from our ancient creed. Now, have you ever read our Vedas?"

"I cannot say that I have," replied the bishop. "But, dame, a discussion of this kind is unseemly; you are too positive in your error."

"Am I? And what has yours been so far but a life of vileness and pretension? You tell me I cannot live long; but hear me. Old as I am, I shall survive you; your days will soon be numbered." Here the bishop's cheek was seen to blanch. "You tell me that I have practised on the credulous, and have taken from the poor; yet, poor as I

am, the little which I have privately given might count equal to your own ostentatious alms. But on whose credulity have you practised? What have you been doing? Is not your trade a deception, only submitted to because it is popular here in Europe? You are servile to a myth because it brings you money; and servile priests have made a servile people. If I have, as you say, taken money from the poor, whether I have given value or not is best known to those who have dealt with me. But what have you given to rich or to poor for what you have taken for your soothsaying? What a wolfish conscience you have to accept the pile of gold that you get every year, while thousands of your fellow creatures, even more worthy than you, are houseless and starving; but I've been only a common fortune teller. What were your prophets but such, whose predictions have never yet been fulfilled? Ah, Thomas Sumpter, apostolic knave, I know you well, and all the conscience or honor that you ever possessed might be hidden in a poppy flower."

"Now you deal in falsehoods," quickly retorted the Bishop, getting rather angry. "Woman I know you not; you know nothing of me."

"Do I not? I know you and all your race. Do I not know those hireling expounders of godliness, whose obtrusive cunning stalks about in the guise of simplicity? Whose cupidity is fed by the ostentatious doling out of pence to the poor in the presence of the wealthy; who rail against riches in order to become rich, who pray for humility in order to obtain power, who are weak-kneed where there is danger, and formidable where there is no foe, and who are sycophantic to tyrants, and arrogant to the oppressed? O ye meek wolves! ye affectionate vultures! O, ye would be lords of heaven and of earth, what a world this would-be were ye possessed of unlimited power?"

"Vile woman, your mouth should be stopped," exclaimed the bishop.

"Ay, that's your plan; that's your favorite mode of argument; but you can't stop me. I know ye too well, ye

canting hypocrites who revel in deceit. I know ye, placid schemers, who proclaim toleration, yet fiercely persecute, who denounce slavery, yet keep the mind in bondage. O, ye proud-unassuming, ye humble-arrogant knaves, ye specious frauds that feed man upon myths which many of yourselves reject! O, ye race of sophistical, consecrated impostors, where would progress be if left to your control? see what confusion you have wrought by your creeds and confessions; see what you have done by your prayers and your pretensions. O, ye living lies that hoard up gold in the midst of poverty, and that neglect black crime in your own country to preach repentance in foreign lands. O, ye beggars, ye plotters, ye pretenders, ye evil angels, see what a wreck ye have altogether made of this beautiful world! I know ye!"

"Infamous, unscrupulous woman," retorted his lordship, "you are a defamer; you know nothing of us, you know not one present, not one." and now the heightening color flushed the bishop's face.

Zingari fixed her black eye on him for a moment and then slowly said: "Viper, I know you too well—perhaps you think that like yourself I have forgotten Agnes."

"Woman," said he, now startled and angry, "you are an impostor, a vile wretch, you never saw her face—never—I know not of whom you speak."

"Do you not?" replied she calmly, "Look there and see if you can recognize any one." Zingari then walked slowly to the carriage; she extended her right arm so as to bring her hand within ten or twelve inches of the bishop's face, this hand was partly doubled in order to hold a small circular mirror of polished steel or silver, about the size of a crown piece; the face of this little mirror was slightly convex, and when she presented it to the bishop it had a dim appearance, similar to that which the breath might produce on a polished surface. The bishop's eyes seemed to rest involuntarily on the mirror; presently in the center of it a bright spot appeared which grew slowly larger and larger until it neared the

edge of the mirror, and then the bishop's gaze became intense when he saw what seemed to be the reflection of the face of a beautiful gypsy girl, whose age might be about twenty years. The face had a very wan, sad expression, and at the lower corner of each side of the mouth, there seemed to be veritable little blood marks; and though the bishop would have fain withdrawn his eyes, he still gazed and now actually shuddered.

"That's a fraud—another of your impositions," cried out Parson Rockett who sat beside the bishop, "I can see nothing, neither can any one else," and the angry rector snatched the mirror, and with a hasty fling tried to send it far into the brushwood where it never should be found. He then turned a defiant look upon the old gypsy woman, and was himself amazed to see her now standing a few feet distant, and holding out in full view before all, the very mirror which he fancied he had just thrown to a great distance.

"This doesn't part from us as easily as you imagine," said Zingari still holding out the mirror. "If I am an impostor, you will admit that my sleight-of-hand is such as you do not often witness."

Though the bishop sat silent and evidently subdued, the rector of Betnall grew now more interested, and tried to believe that in his excitement he had failed to get hold of the mirror, and he demanded that it should be placed in his hands for the purpose of satisfying all that he could send it beyond the reach of its owner.

"One trial must answer," said Zingari, "beware how you make an another attempt."

"Just what I expected you would do if put to the test," shouted Mr. Rockett. Two or more of the clergymen now asked to see the mirror. She held her hand before the face of the Rev. Mr. Morton the rector of Pendell, but the surface of the mirror was quite dim. "There is nothing for you at present," said Zingari, "there may be if you ever see it again."

"Ay, I see how it is," cried Mr. Morton, "a downright

deception! You have imposed on his lordship as you have on most others. You work on people's imagination, and on their fears."

Zingari made no reply, and as Mr. Meade the curate of Pendell, stood close to her she bade him look. The mirror was at first dim, then it became clear as it did for the bishop, and lo, the curate was amazed to see the very likeness of his son who was in India, and whom he had not seen for years.

"Well, is that a deception?" she enquired.

Mr. Meade felt rather timid to make an acknowledgement after what his rector had asserted.

"I cannot say that it is," replied he in a hesitating manner.

"And yet now you are afraid to say so," said Zingari. "How like you are to those others; just as Christian priests always do, for while they shout for truth, they are every ready to deny its claims should it come into conflict with their preconceived notions."

The silence of the curate seemed to be an admission of the truth of what she had said. "You know the face then?"

"I do," answered Mr. Meade.

"Well, then," she continued, "you have got another at home, but be watchful of your bird, for there's a hawk around your dwelling that would do it harm," and she gave a significant glance at the rector of Pendell.

"You would have *him* your dupe also I see," uttered Mr. Morton hastily. "There," said he throwing her a small silver piece, don't fail this time—perhaps you can do better at fortune telling."

Zingari took no notice of the money, but asked him what he particularly wanted to know.

"Well, you have predicted the death of his lordship—a shrewd guess by the by, seeing that we are not all immortal like yourself—but after that what is to happen?"

"Oh, his lordship's great funeral, of course," replied Zingari.

"Capital!" said Mr. Morton affecting to laugh, "capital guessing, as bishops are always certain to have great funerals. What a wonderful seerss to predict what she knows is going to happen."

"Just as your greatest so-called prophets have always done," she retorted.

"Ay, woman, but after all they gave us some shrewd particulars; try your hand in that line; say, for instance, who are to be the pall bearers."

"You will not be one," she quickly replied.

"Well, shall I not be among the mourners?"

"No," said she, "not unless you yourself rise from the grave, which is scarcely probable."

The Rev. Mr. Morton tried to laugh at this capital joke, but somehow the laugh stuck in his throat, yet he continued, as if unabashed:

"O, of course you always like to bury those who are not your dupes. Well, won't you promise me a stately funeral?"

"No, not even the burial of a pauper, for you will never need a coffin."

At this the rector of Pendell, in spite of his affected indifference, was really startled.

"Here, you old Jezebel!" now shouted the Rev. Mr. Rockett, "you have quickly disposed of one bishop and one rector; save your favors for others; there are three or four more of us here, yet. I suppose I shall die also—what then? Don't hurry me off too soon."

"Ah, you think that would be a safe prediction for me," said Zingari. "Well, we will not hurry you off, you will survive the other two, but die you must; aye, unexpectedly before your time."

"Well, but you will bury me decently, won't you?" inquired he in a mocking tone.

"Bury you? ah me, no! You will have no coffin, you will have no funeral—for you will never need even a grave."

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE ISLAND OF SAINTS.

AS soon as John Valiant had made arrangements for the restoration of the old Manor House, for the improvement of the land and cottages on the Heath, and for the present employment and benefit of the poor inhabitants on that portion of his estate, he resumed his search after his son; and he landed in Ireland during the first day of July determined to make a thorough search in that country in the hope of being able to return either accompanied by the object of his solicitude or possessed of some certain knowledge concerning him. During the few months of his stay in England, he had made inquiries not only at the several Mission Houses, but in many other places, and he had also employed trusty agents to try and gain such information as might be most likely to render his journey successful. Any way, though still much depressed the news he had obtained through certain sources, enabled him to start afresh more hopeful than he had been for many a day.

Were a person desirous of tracing out on a map of the world, a land that had been devastated by religious strife, and still cursed by the demon of religious discord, he might look through Asia, that primitive source of religious ideas, he might enter India and course along the Indus, or the Ganges, and thence through China and Japan, and find men worshiping at different altars, or bowing before different shrines, and yet not be inclined to

hate or harass one another because that Brahma, or Buddha, or Christna, or some other deity, was the object of adoration. He would find that the maxims of Confucius inculcated a reverence for the religious opinions of strangers;* and that even in Africa, where it is said the greatest superstition still abounds, not one of the ancient temples or vast structures which stud the course of the Nile, and indicate the past greatness of Egypt, was ever erected to serve as an Inquisition. In these so-called benighted lands where the great majority of mankind—the still unchristianized—are huddled together, or classified into castes, the powerful and prevailing influence of Paganism has ever been averse to religious persecution; and not until the inquirer has passed into Europe, not until he has entered the very stronghold of that superior Faith for which is claimed every excellence, not until he has reached lands eminently Christian, can he truly discover the terrible effects of bigotry and religious persecution.

Strange that this should be the case, but history will not belie the assertion. Look at the map. Oh! what a contrast between Pagan Rome in the Augustan age, and papal Rome under a Gregory, an Alexander, or an Innocent! See Spain, almost wholly devoted to the Roman Catholic Church, degraded by its intolerance, and its Inquisition; and the government miserably enfeebled by the dictation of priests. Portugal is much in the same condition. France has been rendered restless and revolutionary, as much perhaps by its bigoted, intermeddling ecclesiastics, as by its intriguing rulers, or its insignificant

* "Among the Chinese it is customary to ask, 'To what sublime religion do you belong?' One perhaps will call himself a Confucianist, another a Boodhist, a third a disciple of Lao-tze, a fourth a follower of Mohammed, of whom there are many in China, and then every one begins to pronounce a panegyric on the religion to which he does not belong, as politeness requires; after which they all repeat in chorus, '*Pow-town-Kiao, town-ty*, religions are many; reason is one; we are all brothers.' This phrase is on the lips of every Chinese, and they bandy it from one to the other with the most exquisite urbanity."—Huc's Journey through the Chinese empire, Cap. V.

minority of Huguenots. Austria, and Italy, have just begun to see that the antiquated notion of a one true church has left them far behind in the march of improvement; and that toleration is at last necessary. If this idea of a "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one true church" so steadfastly adhered to in countries exclusively Roman Catholic, has produced such degeneration, how is it in a country where Protestants and Catholics, come into dread conflict; where a so-called heretical faith has been urged on the majority, where wrangling Protestant sects only truly unite in hostility to the papal Church and where added to this hostility political and national wrongs tend to aggravate and perpetuate the hatred that has already existed for centuries? Now where in a map of this wide world can a land be found so cursed and blighted?

There is a beautiful island in the Atlantic, long renowned for its majestic mountains, its lovely valleys, its romantic glens, its splendid lakes, its pleasant rivers, and its clear streams. A fair island, as if nature had been determined to exhibit an epitome of its richness and beauty, a green spot raised in the midst of the blue waves, with glorious scenery, fertile soil, and a healthful climate; with verdant slopes, with rocks, roses, and waterfalls, and every attraction to make it an earthly paradise; and yet this very island richly endowed as it is by the great munificent Hand, has been made nearly desolate by man; and religious and political strife has swept through it, and over it like a very besom of destruction. This island so beautiful, so blighted, and so bereft; this land, such a reproach to its Popes, and potentates, this arena of fearful pious and political discord, can alas! be traced out on the map as—Ireland.

This then was the country to which John Valiant had determined to proceed. He landed in Dublin and remained in the city for a day or two with an old friend whom he had known in India. This person who was in an official position in the Irish capital gave him much information as to the condition of the country, the habits of the people,

and what were thought to be the main causes of the continued discontent of the great majority of the inhabitants. Ireland was still very much disturbed; the chronic state of rebellion in which it had been for centuries, still required the presence of a large number of troops, and these, with priests, parsons, and policemen, and numerous ragged, hungry looking creatures wandering through the streets were the most common and striking objects that met the eye of a stranger. How different from what one should expect! Here was a land which might be the happy home of millions, but from which thousands annually rush as if from a plague stricken country—it is a stricken country—it has been blighted by sectarian strife; and in every phase of misfortune that has befallen this unhappy island, religious plotting, and religious discord can be traced as the root of the evil. Here for a long period was a pampered State Church—now happily disestablished—representing but a fraction of the population, yet reveling in wealth and pretension; which for long years, and in its palmiest days, was rapacious enough to exact tithes from the great bulk of the inhabitants who were of a hostile belief—the Roman Catholic majority, then, and still, the most destitute class of Irish—and on whom it tried, often by the vilest means, to force a detested creed, a church which would still continue to exact the last penny from the very people who hated its doctrines, were it not for the cry of, “shame, shame,” which startled at last even an indolent majority in the British Parliament to a sense of simple justice. And then, when this very church was deprived of this infamous right to directly assess Irish Roman Catholics, (as it has assessed Irish and English Dissenters,) as a proof of its reliance on Providence, its pusillanimous moanings—such as it lately gave upon its disestablishment in Ireland—were heard throughout the land, as if it had been forsaken by God and man.

But though the Catholics had declaimed long and loud to a Protestant clergy against the oppression of tithes one might assert that this affliction was but retributive; for

their own Church claimed tithes, without remorse, in every country over which it had control; and Pope Innocent III. was among the first to establish this odious Jewish tax on all alike in England; and his decretal was, of course, equally authoritative in Ireland. The English State Church, however, such as it was, and such as it is, was but a partial evil in the land. The Roman Catholics had, and still have, a much more oppressive burden in the support of the ostentatious form of faith to which they are so devotedly attached. If Ireland has not been the actual flower garden of the Roman Church, it has certainly been its kitchen garden, and while the numerous hierarchs of the Popedom have flourished and fattened among an impoverished people, they have made those same people—the Roman Catholic Irish—their veriest slaves. The Irish Catholic bishops, though ever ready to talk in lofty strains about patriotism, have never yet been too faithful to their own country. They declaim against England, yet are willing to accept her gold and her favors, as if their rights; they are willing that the Irish race should remain moderately turbulent—a thorn in the forefinger of Britain; they are willing to denounce “Saxon” schools, and “Saxon” innovations, and “Saxon” civilization, but yet would be among the first to prevent the people, whom they had gradually trained to believe, that resistance to tyrants was a duty, from the commission of an overt act, though that very act should secure for all their fancied political liberty. Rome has ever been almost idolized by the Irish priesthood; and Rome, the fanatic, that would prevent a Protestant Bible, a Protestant church, or even a Protestant cemetery from being within its holy boundaries,* is exalted as the model of truth and propriety for all nations; and though those same Irish bishops well know that the submission of their country to England is the result of the machinations of a veritable Pope, (Adrian IV.,) still, as if oblivious of this fact, the whole

* See Note 2.

fearful story is not told, but the entire blame is placed on others, or thrown upon the shoulders of the hated Saxon.

Alas for this poor island! the rule of priests has secured for it an unhappy notoriety; and traces of their degenerating sway can be seen in the faces of too many of its people. After centuries of ecclesiastical domination, ignorance and superstition prevail; the Irish are no longer the teachers, the poets and the musicians of Europe; their bards are all but forgotten, and their harp almost silent. O! what have hostile creeds and blind faiths done for Ireland? What have mitres, and crosiers, and spangles, and lawn, and consecrated gew-gaws and trumpery, Catholic and Protestant, wrought for this creed-cursed country?

Such were the ideas that prevailed in the mind of John Valiant respecting Ireland; he could form no other conclusion than that this land of which he had heard so much, had been deplorably misgoverned for centuries; and that, though the government had of late years, been honestly trying to better the condition of the country, almost every effort in this direction had been interfered with by the clergy, principally by those of Rome. The recital of the political sufferings of Ireland must still go on; every wound must be made to bleed afresh, and the persecuted Church of his Holiness must be exalted as the greatest of martyrs, as if the persecutions of heresy were not vastly more cruel and extensive than all others. No, nothing should be forgotten by Catholic priests; the past should never die—they would never see a single hope; but while England ruled, the bleak future was to be ushered in, surrounded by the blackest thunder clouds, as if ominous of continued disasters for their unhappy island.

As it was, Mr. Valiant found that the people were divided into sects and parties too prejudiced to reason, and too much under the subjection of priestly rulers, to dare think for themselves; and, from what he saw, he could not help believing that if it had been the policy of those in authority, civil and religious, to create disunion and to engender strife among a naturally kind and generous peo-

ple, they had only been too successful. He found that after prayers and penalties, after blessings and excommunications, after a lavish distribution of "Acts and Epistles," and acts of Parliament, that Ireland was still volcanic, still ejecting its destructive lava, flinging its burning scoria far and near, and often rendering even noon-day dismal with its smoke, its ashes, and its deadly vapors.

It was a gala day in Belfast, a great number of people had assembled in the city; flags were suspended in different places; several vessels at the quays had hoisted an unusual quantity of bunting, and gaudy banners floated in the genial air over certain buildings, and a few hung gently ruffled even from some of the highest steeples. Shouting boys displaying blue and yellow ribbons tramped here and there through the streets; and men, women, and children wandered about as if bent upon exhibiting ribbons of the same kind tied around, or fastened to hats, caps, and bonnets. Even most of the sedate, respectable business men as they went along wore a little of this yellow or blue ribbon in a button hole, and the yellow, or rather the orange color, seemed on this particular day to be so prized by all, that few persons could be seen who had not from a finger's length to a yard or two of this kind of ribbon fastened to coat or hat, as if it were a token of some distinction. On ordinary occasions the chief town of Protestant Ulster might be a model of sobriety and quietness, but on this day, although it was yet the early forenoon, a more rampant, noisy number of people could hardly be got together; and it is questionable whether strict sobriety could have engendered the wanton enthusiasm which appeared to control nearly all. Many seemed to act as if there had been granted a special license to be as boisterous and as unruly as possible; and many others went strutting about with defiant look and rude bearing, as if anxious to discover an opponent on whom to exhibit appropriate vengeance. To make things more confused, other noises besides loud shouting were almost continuous. Shots were heard within the respectable

corporation boundaries of the city; fire crackers rattled on the streets, and on house tops; the constant rat-a-tat-tat of little drums was deafning, and that which was required to complete the most bewildering disorder was produced by shrieking fifes, whistles, and tin trumpets, blown in every direction by boys whose puffed cheeks gave evidence of a determination to make the most ear-piercing sounds from the most insignificant of instruments.

A short time before mid-day the Dublin train reached the Belfast station; there were many passengers, several of whom rejoiced not only in a profusion of blue and yellow ribbons, but who also wore peculiar shaped orange collars, and a few men wore a kind of red gown which gave them a most absurd and slovenly appearance. One individual, apparently some kind of a leader or official, besides wearing ribbons, a collar, and a rich scarf, had also two or three medals fastened on his breast. He was a stout, low-sized man, with a short neck, a florid face, and something of the vulgar bully in his appearance. Indeed at first view, one even reasonably skilled in physiognomy might wonder how such a man could do any act that would entitle him to wear any medal other than one of the most poisonous brass; but like other (so-called heroes) he might have won them because he was a partizan who could be reckless and inhuman against political or religious opponents. He had evidently been expected, for when the cars stopped, a crowd of men variously bedizened awaited his arrival, and when he stepped from the car a loud shout rent the air, irregular shots were fired, little drums rattled, flags were waved about in the wildest manner, and two or three bands struck up a medley of tunes, producing a *pot pourri* which to a musical ear was simply distracting.

After a little delay this distinguished visitor, who proved to be a "deputy grand" something among the Irish Orangemen, entered a carriage with three other persons, a long procession was formed, the bands struck up again, banners were again waved, and the cortege moved off from

the station. This was the great 12th of July, a day more sacred to many Orangemen than our Christmas is to Christians. The anniversary of the battle of the Boyne was again to be celebrated. King William on horseback—the Orange idol—was once more to be flaunted before the eyes of the incensed Catholics; an old feud was to be offensively brought to remembrance, aided even by some who claimed to be distinguished as ministers of a religion of peace; and Protestantism here was again about to raise its triumphant head in proud disdain for Pope and popery, ready to pray for the conversion of the dupes of that system, or perhaps more ready to consign them to infamy; willing that the country should be purged of their presence, and that Providence might be further honored and glorified, in their complete banishment or annihilation.

Mr. Vallant who had arrived at Belfast by the same train, was rather surprised at this singular demonstration. He waited quietly at the station until nearly all had departed; and, as every vehicle in waiting had rolled away hurriedly filled, he threw his light overcoat across his arm, and carrying a small valise, took his way leisurely towards the principal hotel. As he went along he discovered that, for some reason, he was the object of much questionable attention, and that notwithstanding the clatter and the rush of people that had taken place in their desire to keep near the principal carriage, many persons stood and stared at him as if he had been an unbaptized native of the Sandwich Islands. Little Protestant boys—for they wore the Orange ribbon—were so rude as to yell after him as he walked on, and five or six of them followed him closely, sometimes rushing in front of him to make grimaces, while one or another of their number would be violently pushed against him; others who stood behind kept shouting, “papist! papist! papist!” and some actually flung mud and stones at him, with the most lawless intentions.

Amazed at such conduct, and really astonished that no one interfered to save a stranger from insult, John Vallant

quickened his pace, and had just turned the corner of a street when he came face to face with two very drunken men who stood in front of a kind of low tavern. The men wore orange collars, and had a profusion of blue and yellow ribbons, and as soon as they perceived the strange person before them, for some imaginable cause, they rushed forward as if to lay hold of him. By a dexterous movement, however, he just escaped their clutches, and as he passed quickly beyond their reach, they seemed to grow furious and between the stormy oaths and imprecations which they roared in anger, the Orangemen's blessing, "To hell with the Pope," could be distinctly heard until he turned down another street and disappeared. Under the impression that many of the inhabitants of this northern Christian city were more savage and uncivilized than any of the wildest heathens he had ever met in foreign lands, he began to feel anxious to get to the hotel. Not a policeman was in view, even the few he had seen about the railroad station must have been partisans, for they too exhibited a portion of the orange in a button-hole. If he asked a question no one would give him a civil reply; even the very women either laughed at his apparent discomfiture, or scowled at his presence.

He made some inquiries as to his way to a certain part of the city, but he must have been wilfully misdirected, for he soon found himself wandering through the most filthy streets, where every second or third house seemed to be a wretched kind of groggery or beer shop; and in these squalid retreats numbers of people had assembled. Their beverage must, of course, have had its due effect, for already several were singing, and bawling, and toasting with screaming voice, "The glorious pious and immortal memory." Even here the Orange flags and streamers were again conspicuous, and maudlin men with glazed eye and clammy lip, reeled along the highways singing snatches of the "Boyne Water," and "Croppies Lie Down," and halting occasionally to look around and defiantly shout, "To hell with the Pope."

As it was, Mr. Valiant felt somewhat uneasy. There he was apparently in the most disreputable part of a strange town, among a drunken, ruffianly set who were ready to insult, or to lay violent hands on him without the least provocation. But this was his mistake; he had unwittingly giving offence; he had without his knowledge exasperated some reckless, excitable men; and just as a bull might be made furious by the sight of a red shawl, the mere sight of the light *green* silk vest, which he, John Valiant, as a free-born Briton, wore on his arrival in this good Protestant city, and which so raised the ire of certain of its pious and loyal inhabitants, had nearly cost him his life; for the six or eight villainous fellows who now surrounded him, would not have hesitated to commit any atrocity on the person of a defiant papist—for such they took him to be—were it not for the prompt interference of a gang of Catholic workmen, and common laborers who just happened to pass at the time. They understood the difficulty at once. The same green vest was the talisman which awoke their sympathies, and aroused them to action; a fight quickly ensued, blows came fast and heavy, there was a renewal of furious strife between the Orange and the Green. The Pope was again sent to hell—King William was again lustily damned; and Luther and Calvin, and John Knox, consigned again to the bottomless pit. During the melee, John Valiant, who had already knocked down more than one of the aggressors, and who was quite willing to stand by his new friends, was forced away from the spot by some of his ardent admirers. They looked upon him as being a brave champion who was not afraid to display the Green even in the midst of a vile Orange faction, and as they wished to see him safe they conducted him to one of the principal streets. His liberal reward was promptly refused; and with hearty repetitions of "God bless your honor," resounded in his ears, he hurried on, and without broken bones, or further molestation, soon arrived at his desired quarters.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHRISTIAN HARMONY.

THE hotel in which Mr. Valiant found refuge, was, perhaps the principal one in the city, and, for that day at least, seemed to be the headquarters of the Belfast Orangemen, as well as for the crowd of that fraternity which attended from a distance. A great Orange flag waved from the cupola of the building; a similar banner was hung over the principal entrance; and sundry other flags and streamers, decorated windows, and fluttered from conspicuous points of this particular rendezvous. Several lodges of the brethren stood in waiting along the street, and a great number of people had assembled to witness another annual display of ostentatious loyalty.

On his way to the hotel, Mr. Valiant had to pass through nearly this entire assemblage, and though he was again stared at by many, and heard muttered remarks about his "wearing of the green," yet those hereabout were sufficiently discreet to refrain from coarse language, and so far orderly enough as to offer no offense. Besides, the very fact of his having, as a traveler, chosen this resort, satisfied many, that though he had, no doubt, thoughtlessly ventured to wear on this great day a disloyal color, he would have never approached such a place unless he was "all right."

When he entered the hotel, he found it well filled; several of the principal magnates of "the order" had called to pay their respects to the "Deputy Grand" wor-

thy, who had been his fellow-passenger on the train from Dublin. This individual was in one of the largest front rooms, holding a kind of levee. There was nothing very dignified in the proceeding, for all seemed to be hilarious; and while these happy fellows were making arrangements for the grand procession, which was about to take place, Mr. Valiant hastened to change his vest; for, from what he had heard, and from what had happened, he now began to have a strong suspicion that he was indebted to the color of that article of his apparel for the singular attention which had already been paid to him since his arrival in Belfast.

It had been arranged that the procession should start by noon from this temporary headquarters, but one thing or another caused delay, and it was over an hour before everything was in readiness. By that time, a great many people were standing at street corners, and crowds lined the principal thoroughfares along which the procession was expected to pass. Spectators could be seen at every window; and boys who had climbed lamp posts, stood watching and waiting upon these, and upon any other accessible elevation that might give them a chance to see what was going on.

Besides the many eager sight-seers, soldiers could be seen drawn up in certain localities, and an extra force of policemen, distributed here and there, was ready for any emergency. It had also been rumored that a great body of Catholics had determined to oppose the offensive display. Orangemen had been riotous and violent, and had interrupted the late Catholic celebration of St. Patrick's day. The annual recurrence of Orange demonstrations was felt by the Catholics of Ireland to be not only uncalled for, but a sore cause of irritation—more like a studied insult than a desire simply to perpetuate the "glorious, pious and immortal memory" of King William, and which insult, if the Government could not prevent it, must be resented at any cost. As it was, many sensible, well-meaning persons, Protestant and Catholic, were fully

satisfied that, no matter what necessity might have called Orangelsm into existence, there was not the least requirement for its continuation—none any way for its offensive public displays; that if it were even a protective association, it was now, in fact and spirit aggressive and unruly; and, from a common sense point of view, must be adjudged a wanton grievance. As a secret society, it had done no good; and as most secret societies have a tendency to make weak minds enraptured with silly mysteries, to make men exclusive, and to circumscribe generous impulses, the Orange association in particular had been noted for its creation of furious partisans, many of whom can be almost totally blind to the claims of reason and justice, when called upon to decide in the interest of a "brother," or in that of the so-called "loyal organization."

Nearly a century ago, when rude Protestant mobs, called "Peep-o-day Boys," used to assemble at the early dawn for the purpose of committing agrarian and other outrages upon as rude a mob called "White Boys," as well as upon other Catholics who were united in opposition to the payment of tithes; when Catholics in turn united and were known as "Defenders," subsequently as "Ribbon-men," and retaliated on Protestants, when collisions and butcheries were of daily, or rather of nightly occurrence, the whole country, especially in the north, was the scene of violence and ruffianism scarcely ever exceeded. About the time when it was felt that the penal laws, long strictly enforced against "papists" had been greatly relaxed; and when it was found that the Irish Catholics had become generally more disaffected toward English rule, it was thought important to make the union of Protestants more influential. Most of the "Peep-o-day Boys" were as low and as brutal in their instincts as it was possible for any of the "White Boys," or the "Defenders," to be, and very few beyond this class of Protestant protectors cared to be connected with such a body as these "Peepers." However, after some cogitation and planning, certain men of respectability and position, including Protestant minis-

ters, were secured, and the first Orange Lodge was founded in the village of Loughall, in the county of Armagh, on the 21st of September, 1795. The name of Orangeism was chosen in honor of William III., Prince of Orange, and it was not long before the association had branches in every part of the Kingdom; it was even acknowledged by Royalty, for the Duke of Cumberland became the Grand Master for England in 1827.

Previous to this time it had crept into the army, several regiments having had warrants for holding lodges; and it infested British society, not only in the United Kingdom, but in many of the British colonies.

At first Orangeism was said to represent a defensive association, such it might have done, but what has it since become? Though many worthy, well-meaning persons have been induced to enroll themselves under its banners, many others upon closer acquaintance, have readily withdrawn. The Orange organization has not entirely proved itself to be a fraternity to secure religious liberty, and to check lawless intolerance; it has itself too often become lawless, intolerant, and overbearing, it has not been a union of the most intelligent, the most orderly, or the most peaceable, but frequently the refuge of too many of the very opposite character; too often a mere political stepping-stone for a class of men who could never obtain either office, or authority, or worthy distinction of any kind, outside of this peculiar association; and who are at times inconsistent enough to denounce the Pope or to serve his cause, just as the policy of political leaders may require, for, at the present day, it may be fairly asserted that Orangeism is as much a political as a religious organization.

An impartial writer in an article on Orangeism says: "The worst result of the Orange association was the constant incentive which it supplied to party animosities and deeds of violence. In the north of Ireland the party displays and processions were a perpetually recurring source of disorder, and even of bloodshed, and the spirit of fra-

ternity which pervaded its members was a standing obstacle to the administration of the law. It was known or believed that an Orange culprit was perfectly safe in the hands of an Orange jury; and all confidence in the local administration of justice by magistrates was destroyed. These facts, as well as an allegation which was publicly made, of the existence of a conspiracy to alter the succession of the crown in favor of the Duke of Cumberland, led to a protracted parliamentary inquiry, as well as a very shocking outrage perpetrated soon afterward by an armed body of Orangemen on occasion of a procession in Ireland tended so much to discredit the association, and to awaken the public mind to a sense of the folly and wickedness of such associations, that its respectability has since that time gradually diminished. So great was the popular distrust of the administration of justice in party questions, that for several years the Lord Chancellor laid down a rule, by which no member of the Orange association was admitted to the commission of the peace; and although the association still exists, it is comparatively without influence, except among the very lowest classes in the north of Ireland. Of the colonial offshoots of the Orange association, those of Canada have at all times been the most active and the most flourishing. The Canadian Orangemen being for the most part Irish emigrants, carried with them all the bitterness of the domestic feud with Roman Catholics. Outrages directed against Catholic churches, convents, and other institutions were of not unfrequent occurrence until recently; and on occasion of the late visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada, an attempt was made to force from His Royal Highness a recognition of the association, which was only defeated by his own firmness and by the judicious and moderate counsels of his advisers."*

Notwithstanding all this, those who in a manner exist by Orangeism have agitated for a repeal of all prohibitory laws against Orange processions; and the Orange society

* See Chamber's Enc. Art. Orangeism.

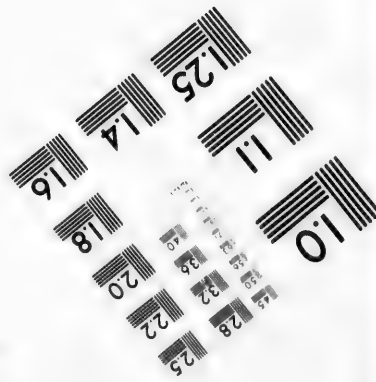
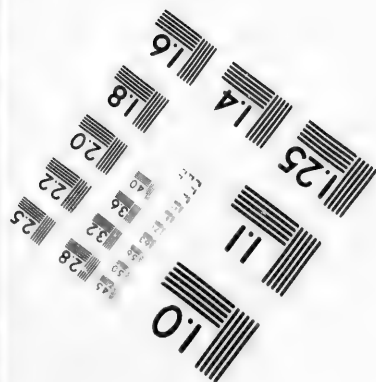
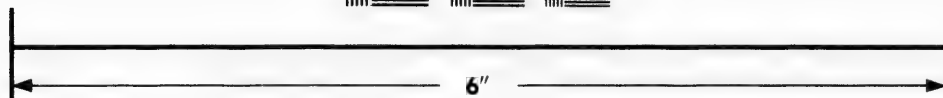
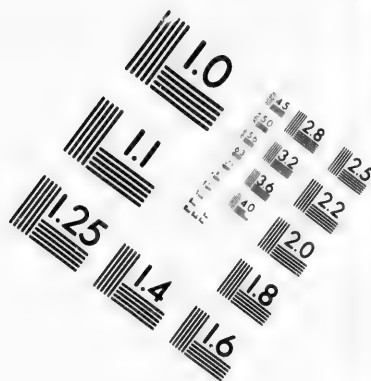
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would fain appear as persecuted virtue evoking sympathy; and notwithstanding the pleas and the pretensions of this vaunting association, many of its leaders, and many of its members, have proved recreant to their loudly avowed principles; there seems to be a leaven of Jesuitism even in this society; for Orange members of Parliament, especially in Canada, have been known to readily vote for munificent grants to Catholic theological institutions, and very few have proved more servile to Catholic Church dignitaries than Orange politicians anxious for political support, and Orange statesmen eagerly desirous of retaining power.

When it became known that the Catholics had determined to oppose the procession, or attack the "loyal body," the wildest shouts were heard in various quarters; many were delighted at the bare idea of having a chance to cut down a "damned papist;" and certain mounted officials, with streaming ribbons, galloped furiously about, frantically brandishing a sword or other weapon, as if the whole "glorious cause" just then and there depended on the quantity of bluster or perspiration that might escape them. At the time there appeared to be much confusion, and together with shouts, and oaths and screams, there was a great waving of flags and pounding of big drums. Frightened women were hurrying off, many of them urging crying children to greater speed. Shopkeepers could be seen hastily putting up shutters and closing their places of business; apple women and other petty dealers, were making off with their stands, and several persons were fastening down windows, and taking such other hurried precautions for safety as were thought necessary.

Shots and shouts, the beating of big drums, and the rattle of little drums, and the wild medley of party tunes, were again heard; and the din and discord were most bewildering. Lodge after lodge fell in; a great line was formed, and after more needless galloping and cantering about, the procession at last started. Somewhat in ad-



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vance, the "Deputy Grand," mounted on a grey horse, rode with affected stately bearing; men at arms, and high Orange officials on either side, made, as it were, vigorous exertions to curb their restless, prancing steeds, and as the sun shone down on swords and spears, and upon red cloaks, red flags, and orange flags; upon yellow and blue ribbons, and upon the varied tinsel and rude decorations of this motley assemblage, the whole appeared to be more like a vast gathering of harlequins; than an organized fraternity intent on mischief.

Mr. Valiant from his seat at an upper window of the hotel had seen the preparatory arrangements for the procession, and, having waited until it moved away, and had time to pass through some of the principal streets, was about to follow and see something of the display, in order to be able to judge as to the effect of such an exhibition upon a population so divided in theological belief. He was not at the time aware that there was to be any hostile Catholic demonstration; this, though known to many others had not reached him, and he had attributed the wild shouts, that had rent the air to a feeling of Orange exuberance. Now, however, just as he was about to start from the place, he was surprised to see a wild mob of men, who were yelling like fiends, rush up in front of the hotel. As their sudden appearance and savage aspect boded no good, he quickly re-entered the house, and went up again to the room which he had just left. The landlord was a picture of consternation; he seemed to know at a glance with whom he had to deal. Many of the servants were terror stricken, most of them left the house and ran off to places of security. There was no time lost by the new comers; several of the mob rushed into the house like furies, smashing windows, and furniture, and any thing they could lay hands on; others tore down the large Orange flag that hung over the doorway, and the banner, which but a few minutes previously had waved proudly from the cupola, was now, like the other flag, lying in the dusty street, torn into shreds, while a hundred yelling

men, and even some wild looking women, were trampling it into the ground, befouling every thread of the orange silk, damning King William, and swearing loud vengeance against all connected with the "infernal rabble of Orangemen."

No one could be more helpless than the landlord of the hotel in this extremity; he had been left almost entirely deserted; a few of his servants who had remained with him had been violently assaulted and had to flee for their lives. He saw some of the infuriated men make preparation to set fire to the place, and as he was well-known for his Orange proclivities, he dared not approach to plead or to remonstrate; for he well knew that his life would then be held but of little account. None in the neighborhood dared come to his assistance, and he expected to witness nothing but complete disaster. While in this dilemma he was noticed by some who were demolishing his property. A cry was raised, and nearly a score of savage men chased him along halls and corridors, and just as he was ready to fall into their hands weak and panting, a door was suddenly opened by a gentleman; the landlord rushed into the room and locked the door; the gentleman heroically remained on the outside, and the savage pursuers were suddenly stayed in their course by the resolute appearance and attitude of John Valiant.

After a few moments hesitation, one fellow made an attempt to advance, and cried out: "Stand aside and let us in!"

"If you follow that man, you do so at your own peril; I'll not let one of you pass in here if I can prevent it," said Mr. Valiant in a determined tone.

"Stand aside, I tell you. We must tear that damned Orangeman to pieces," and the man made another attempt to get to the door.

"If you approach one step further you will force me to use this, and I shall do it. Don't come nearer." John Valiant had somehow got possession of the short thick end of a broken flag-pole; it was a piece of ash, and would

have been a terrible weapon in the hands of him who then grasped it.

The men instinctively judging that they had an unflinching person to deal with, again hesitated, and, in their disappointment they now became abusive.

"You're another of the infernal crew; if you don't get out of our way we'll soon find something, and hack you to pieces."

"I'm no Orangeman," replied John Valiant, "but you are cowards to come here twenty to one after a single man. Don't approach, I tell you; another step and I strike," and now the heavy stick was raised and a furious and perhaps fatal blow would have been given, if the fellow who tried to advance had not quickly retreated.

"You are one of the vile tribe—we'll send you to hell; but that's too good for you," now shouted another. "You've got the cursed colors next your heart—it ought to be torn out and stuffed in your own mouth." While saying this the man pointed scornfully to Mr. Valiant's breast.

In changing part of his apparel after his late misadventure upon his arrival in the city, Mr. Valiant had thoughtlessly replaced the light green silk vest which had given such offence, with one of a blue color, and though the shade was rather deep, it only made the small silken orange sprigs scattered over it more conspicuous. Even then, after this fresh reviling, it did not occur to him that he was wearing any color which could possibly give offence.

It is probable that the evil disposed men who were then held aloof, would have soon overcome all opposition, and have burst into the room, but just then a number of soldiers and constables made their appearance. A few of the lawless men who had entered the house were arrested, the others had made their escape.

Before the arrival of this fortunate succor, the landlord had jumped down from a back window to a balcony, and thence to a lane, from which he made off from his enemies. Soon afterward, when he could venture to re-

turn to the house with servants and assistants, Mr. Valiant took his way through the city, desirous of finding out the perambulating lodges.

While on their course through the streets, the report came to the ears of some of the Orange leaders, that their late headquarters had been nearly demolished. A sufficient number of men were at once detached and sent back to defend the place; soldiers and policemen had also received orders to hurry forward. In the absence of certain Orange bodies, a simultaneous attack had been made on their lodge rooms, and a great deal of property was destroyed. The houses of many of the most prominent Orangemen in the city had been ransacked, and individual Orangemen, and certain other Protestants, had been hunted and waylaid here and there, and badly beaten. Much injury had been done; but as the Catholics had so far refrained from making a direct attack on the procession, the incensed Orangemen were perplexed and burning for revenge; and as they could not at once lay violent hands on the "damned papists," they could any way visit their accursed mass houses and scatter their crosses and their idols to the wind, and pitch their holy water into the nearest puddle.

With such intent, over a thousand Orangemen had orders to move forward. The "Deputy-Grand" and his mounted companions, were determined, somehow, to teach the papists another lesson that should be remembered. Moving on them at a quick pace, it was not long before they drew up before a large Catholic chapel, with intent, it might be, to demolish it forthwith—at least such was the desire of a great majority of those present. However, before these Christian iconoclasts commenced their exemplary work, a fanatical chaplain, who wore a white gown, and who, while holding a Bible in one hand, clutched a sword in the other, proposed that all present, who had never bent the knee to Baal, should first ask the blessing of God on their "endeavors to serve His holy cause, the cause of civil and religious freedom, the cause of our

glorious Constitution—the grand Orange cause.” Here there was loud cheering, and while the pious chaplain was making shuffling endeavors to mount a cart for the purpose of being sufficiently elevated to offer up a prayer, the “Deputy-Grand” and several of his magnates galloped up and interfered for the time with the devout proposal.

This great official having intimated his desire to address the brethren, a vast circle was soon formed, he and his companions rode to the centre, and with lusty voice he then and there spoke out to those assembled :

“Orangemen—loyal brothers—upholders of the cause of civil and religious liberty, (great cheers,) surrounded, as I am, by your impenetrable ranks, I feel that our holy and glorious Protestant principles are safe (cheers), and that could the sneaking Vicegerant of the devil, who now hides his diminished head under the shadow of the seven Roman hills ; (cheers) could that propounder of blasphemous infallibility, with his triple crown, and dead men’s bones, see your proud faces on this auspicious day (cheers), he would tremble again on his tottering throne in the sublime presence of Orange freemen (terrific huzzas). But, brethren, much as we have done and suffered for our glorious principles, how have we been treated by a dastard Government, that would dare to circumscribe Orange liberty? (Hisses.) Here we are, face to face with benighted papists—far worse than the veriest infidels—papists, who have been pampered to audacity, and while trying to control and enlighten those serfs of Popery, we have, even on this very day, been made to suffer loss and injury for our moderation (yells); and many of us have become martyrs in the cause of truth and loyalty (renewed yells). Shall we, sons of noble sires, submit without resistance to papist insults? (Never, never!) Servile statesmen now in power, have tried to denounce our principles, and to reduce us to the degraded level of Romanists. But hear me, brethren: by all the powers eternal, this shall never be: (Great cheers.) We feel that we can be independent of rotten statesmen; we feel, and we know,

that we can have powerful aids; for the Lord God, even the God of Israel, is on our side. (Immense cheering.)

See here, valiant brothers, I have on my Orange scarf (cheers) because I am the Deputy-Grand Master of the Orange Association of England (cheers), and because it represents a good principle. It represents civil and religious liberty. (Loud cheers.) It represents an open Bible. (Cheers.) It represents the preaching of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. O brethren, shall I tell you something? (Hear, hear, cries of "yes.") Two or three years ago, I sent to the New York State fifty Orange warrants, and you will find in their lodge rooms—you will find fifty papers signed with the name of ——. (Cheers.) We have 300,000 armed Orangemen in Canada; we have 250,000 in Ireland (cheers), and there is not one of the Queen's ships that sails out of Portsmouth, that does not contain a band of Orangemen. (Cheers.) What then can we fear from Gladstone, that infernal Jesuit? (Loud cheers and laughter.) I defy thee, (cheer) oh Pope of Rome, thou unconfined fiend of hell, the Lord God shall shortly consume thee. (Cheers and laughter.) O House of Lords—must I say it—I will say it, (laughter,) thou shalt perish. (Laughter.) Shall I say something more? I will say it. O Prince of Wales, thou wilt never be king of England." (Laughter and confusion.)*

A short time before the conclusion of this address several excited and uncontrollable Orangemen had attacked bystanders whom they took to be papists, others had placed ladders against the gothic windows of the Catholic church for the purpose of entering the building by that means; and while others were trying to force in the large church door, about twenty scattering shots were fired, and a shower of stones followed from behind a low wall which

*That part of the above speech after the words "see here, valiant brothers," is, according to a Belfast newspaper, the actual rodomontade uttered at the annual meeting of the Stalybridge Constitutional Association, in October, 1872, by a Deputy Grand Master of the Orange Association, in seconding a vote of thanks to the Mayor.

enclosed a kind of yard at the back of that edifice. Before the smoke cleared away cries were heard; three men lay on the ground, and five or six others who had been wounded were seen limping away, or led off by friends. Hundreds of the Orangemen now lost all control, and rage and wild excitement seemed to predominate. Nearly a hundred men speedily rushed over the low wall, and the work of havoc commenced. The first man wearing an orange sash who got into the yard fell in a minute dead to the earth; and a stout man with a green scarf, who had struck the mortal blow, now lay by his side desperately wounded. In less than five minutes seven more Orangemen, and thirteen Catholics, lay around in the yard, dead and dying, and many others on both sides were severely wounded. A company of soldiers now rushed forward, cleared the place and took several prisoners. Before the soldiers came many of the Orangemen who had been trying to get into the building through the windows, had been hurled down from the ladders and were badly injured. Still indifferent to the presence of soldiers or of constables the Orangemen in overwhelming numbers continued their assault on the church. Stones flew thick and fast, and every pane of glass, every window, and every door was quickly smashed or broken.

Just at this time John Valiant had a narrow escape. He had overtaken the Orange procession as the "Deputy Grand" had commenced his address to his brethren, and he was a witness of all that had subsequently occurred. Previously, while in the streets among the people, he did his best to allay bad feelings, and after the shots had been fired he, at his own risk, assisted many of the wounded; and he restrained a few others from the commission of bloody deeds. Some time after the arrival of the soldiers he by some means got into the church. He had been greatly heated and fatigued by his exertions to serve others, and as he sat in a retired spot wiping his face with one of the yellow silk handkerchiefs which he had brought from India, about a dozen excited Catholics, who were

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then rushing through the stormed edifice, mistook him for an Orangeman, and dashed at him with all the fury of savages. In another moment he might have been fatally injured were it not for the foremost man who suddenly stopped and spread out his arms as if to keep the others back.

"Good God! what are you? Did I not meet you this morning when you were waylaid by Orangemen? What are you? Who are you?"

"Yes, you met me this morning," said Mr. Vallant, now recognizing his interrogator, "and I don't forget you; I shall, I hope, have to thank you now for another rescue."

"But what are you?" said the man again, and he looked with flashing eyes at the yellow handkerchief.

Mr. Vallant now seemed to understand all, and replied: "I am nothing in this place—nothing but what I was this morning—neither Orange nor Green, but a stranger in this city, even now anxious to get away—never to see it again."

"I believe you speak the truth," said the man who had been looking searchingly into his eyes, "but as you have got rid of the green, get rid of that color also, as soon as you can if you wish to be safe." The men then hurried away, leaving Mr. Vallant alone.

In about a minute afterwards several constables entered and took possession of the church. By the greatest exertions of the military and the police, the infuriated Orangemen were prevented from doing further damage. A strong guard was set to protect the place; and some hours after, when the incendiary crowd had almost disappeared, the guard was replaced by a night watch. But the watchmen must have slept, for before day dawn mighty flames leaped as if to anticipate the sun rise; and all the ensuing day—one of gloom—many were looking with different feelings at the bare, bleak, dilapidated walls of the Catholic church; and those same roofless walls then stood up before all as a fresh evidence of the harmony that exists among Christian people in the "Island of Saints."*

* See accounts of Orange and Catholic riots in Belfast.

CHAPTER XIX.

MISSIONARY EFFORTS AND FAILURES.

WHAT a deluge of rain! as if the weeping heavens were anxious to wash out the blood, and to extinguish the smouldering fire caused by desperate religious riots in a Christian city. It had poured down from an early hour upon the desolate-looking streets of Belfast; and the aspect of nature was truly melancholy. But not alone did the streets seem desolate, for there were desolate homes and desolate hearts; and not alone did the heavens weep, for women and children were weeping over the recent slain. There was weeping in hospitals over those who were soon to die, and there would be weeping to-morrow over the graves of those who had come to a sudden and untimely end.

But yet all did not weep who had lost relatives or friends in the sad havoc of the previous day; there was one who felt little or no regret at what had happened. The Orange chaplain, in white gown, who desired to invoke destruction on the "man of sin," and who would have prayed that the valiant brethren that had been arrayed against popery on the late glorious Twelfth, felt that strife such as had occurred, was necessary; that in the order of Providence, there would be an eternal warring between the forces of good and evil, and that thereby good would almost always overcome. "Staunch Protestantism" was his ideal of good, as "popish mummery" was that of evil. Why, thought he, should there be weeping among the victors; the chaplain could see no reason

for tears—there should he thought, be rather rejoicing—for if one of God's faithful friends had fallen, a dozen of his enemies had been exterminated; and was not this, on the whole, a benefit—a real gain? Besides, the Protestant chaplain felt as much assured, that those of the loyal Orangemen who had yielded up their lives in battling against a foul system of lies and corruption, were just as certain of eternal glory, as some Catholic chaplains felt confident that these same Orange souls would be doomed to an eternity of brimstone for harassing and persecuting the innocent members of the only true Church. And if ordained priests, Protestant and Catholic, entertained such opposite opinions on this, as well as on cognate subjects, it may reasonably be inferred that the people whom they controlled would form similar charitable conclusions.

However, notwithstanding the heavy rain, there were occasional intermissions when one might venture out; and so people watched and waited for a chance to take a hurried walk, or even to run, to see the still smouldering ruins, and the blotches of blood, and the reddened rain-pools that marked the place of contest.

Some rubbed their hands delighted, while gazing at the evidences of the Orange triumph; others, with compressed lips and savage looks, were thinking of revenge. And yet the scene was not altogether strange, it was almost a renewal of what many of those present had witnessed more than once in their lives, and a scene such as others hoped might be viewed again—but from a different standpoint—when those that now exulted should be in consternation.

Though many eager partisans or sympathizers had thus seized opportunities of going out, even for a few minutes, to see what could be seen, many others, just as eager to gaze with satisfaction at the ruins, or to deplore the calamity, but who lived at too great a distance, were obliged to remain at home fretting the hours away, while anxiously waiting for the weather to clear up. In a row

of handsome cottages, situated in Malone, an elevated suburb South of Belfast, and commanding an extensive view, lived the Rev. Seth Graham, or rather, as the polished brass plate on his front door indicated, "Seth Graham, Missionary." Well, this same Mr. Graham, like other ministers, had peculiar views on many subjects, and, though having been duly ordained to preach the Gospel, and, as he believed, to denounce and belabor Popery and Paganism, and if need be, Prelacy also, yet he thought that no man had a right to be called "Reverend;" still, although he positively refused to have that significant prefix put before his name, he rejoiced in the more appropriate addition of "Missionary." To some extent he had been a missionary. Born and educated in the Protestant city of Belfast, and in course of time, after much theological training, set apart by Presbyterian authority for the ministry, his reading and inclination led him to become interested in missionary labor, and to such labor he fancied he had a special call; and strange to say, for one who was troubled with this notion, he took at that time a rather sensible view, and considered it his duty first to carry the "pure word" to the deluded papists of his native land, instead of wandering off from one to ten thousand miles for the purpose of reclaiming other benighted beings.

To Irish papists then he went, yet he carried the missionary notion out so far as to leave those of his native city to the chance proselyting impulses of other preachers, and he turned his steps, Bible in hand, to the far South, fully expecting he could persuade many that the Pope was the "man of sin," and the veritable anti-Christ; and sustained by a strong hope that his message would be gladly received, he first opened the "Book of books" to the staring, scornful Romanists of the old popish city of Cork.

It may be truly said, that his Holiness, the Pope, has not, even under the dome of St. Peter's, any more devoted to his cause, or more subservient to his authority, than

those of the faithful residing in the chief city of the province of Munster. From Glenmire to Black Pool, or round to Black Rock, the Catholics of Cork are far more Roman than the Romans themselves; and though these Catholics forget—many perhaps do not know—that a Pope was in a manner the main cause of the subjugation of their country to England, they now hurl anathemas upon Italian Catholics who have dared to deprive the Holy Father of his temporal power; and nowhere else in Christendom are the rich or the poor—even the almost destitute—more willing to furnish “Peter’s pence” to replenish the purse of the “Vicar of Christ,” or to say a “*pater and ave*” for his prosperity, spiritual and temporal, than those of his creed in the same Munster capital.

It was among such people, then, that Seth Graham, missionary, took a bold stand; and he wrote and spoke against prayers to the Virgin, and against invocations to saints, against confession and absolution, and transubstantiation; against penance and against purgatory; and against crosses and relics, and holy water, but all in vain. He spoke but to deaf ears, for the deluded people only jeered and laughed at him—they were most wilful in their contempt—and many times when he thought it his duty to waylay them as it were, to force them to listen, he would try to catch even a few together as they came from mass out of the principal parish chapel; he would shout aloud in order that they might hear his arguments, or his declamation, and more than once, it was with difficulty that the police and others saved him from the indignation and violence of those whom he would fain convert.

Within less than three months, then, from the time he had left Belfast, he began to suspect that he was in the wrong place, and that he was likely to have but little return for his labor, and not only for his labor, but for certain funds which he had rather lavishly distributed. Before he had commenced this missionary duty, strong appeals had been made to wealthy church members. It had been represented that the time was auspicious, that

sowers might now go forth to sow in southern fields and expect rich harvests, and Protestant Christians were entreated to furnish the indispensable supplies for this special work. Though all would no doubt earnestly pray for the success of God's servant—and prayer was admitted to be the most powerful aid—yet his hand must be otherwise strengthened if they wished these prayers to be of any avail. Long experience had already taught them this. So after much exertion, after church collections, and Sunday school collections, and solicitations from door to door, and after sundry tea meetings, got up by devoted spinsters, a liberal amount had been obtained and placed at the disposal of Mr. Graham, and to this judicious outlay among very needy Romanists, more than to his sermons or prayers, or to the distribution of cheap Bibles, or of texts, or tracts, was he indebted for the solitary half dozen Irish disciples whom he claimed to have converted.

Dissatisfied, or rather disgusted, with the results of his efforts among Irish papists in Cork, he returned to Belfast; and still full of the missionary idea, it was not long before he persuaded himself to believe that his proper place was among the heathen. Popery, although a spurious form of Christianity, had still something of its essence; had, any way, a belief in its great Founder, which was something better and safer by far than paganism or naked unbelief. He was now convinced that the true field for missionary labor was among those who knew nothing of the "Inspired Word," who had never heard the gospel message. To the heathen, therefore, he would go; he would reveal to them the "plan of salvation," without a knowledge of which they must all ultimately perish.

Yearning then, it is presumed, over the deplorable condition of the dusky inhabitants of the East, an opportunity was soon afforded him to hasten to their rescue. The great Sepoy rebellion had just been suppressed, Christianity, it was said, was gaining ground, and the false teachers of Brahminism, Buddhism, and Mahometism, were hiding their heads, ashamed and confounded. The blaze of gos-

pel light that was shed upon a benighted land—aided it might be by the blaze of Christian artillery—had produced glorious results among heathen mutineers. But faithful, courageous expounders of the word were still wanting, and volunteer missionaries were required to fill up the ranks, and to supply the places of the numbers of devoted men who had fallen a prey to native fanaticism, to severe labor, and to an oppressive and unhealthy climate.*

Approved of by the Presbyterian Board of Missions, arrangements were soon made for his departure. The outfit for a proselyting excursion to India would involve no little expense, but funds were ample. The missionary chest had always been well filled. Even though the cries of poverty at home were pitiful; even though the body were suffered to perish for lack of food, the immortal soul must be saved at any cost; so still think the Lord's servants, and so they have always thought. Well supplied, however, as he was, Mr. Graham very properly thought that it was not good for him to be alone, and that it might serve the cause could he find a suitable helpmate. He made it a subject of prayer, and before many days, was fortunate in getting a wife who, like himself, bewailing the sad condition of idolatrous heathen, was willing to leave home, and friends, and native land, and go to the furthest ends of the earth to spread the joyous news. Therefore, feeling himself a chosen messenger, the bearer of blessings and a well filled purse, Seth Graham and his wife went forth equipped for the missionary field, and they set sail for India to join in the unceasing war against the degraded followers of Juggernaut.

Alas for disappointed hopes! A little over two years' experience in India, fully satisfied the Belfast missionary that, notwithstanding the great efforts, the painful sacrifices, and the vast expenditures made by the friends of missionaries to establish pure Christianity among the idolatrous natives of that distant land, the results were

* See Note 2.

as yet of the most paltry kind, and would be altogether disheartening, were it not for the unwavering faith in the future, which still kept hope alive in the bosoms of many Christian ministers and people. He was aware that those Janus-faced apostles, the Jesuits, had been early among the tribes of India, and had, by fostering the system of caste, by claiming to be white Brahmins, and not foreigners, and by a deceitful compromise of religious observance, induced great numbers to believe that Christianity was a religion but slightly differing from their own faith, and therefore to receive the outward form of Christian baptism, while under the impression that that rite was something bearing a close relation to the Hindoo creed; this was the way that Romanism had obtained nearly all of its native adherents in India. But what had been the progress of Protestantism? Though tradition assigns India as the scene of the labors and martyrdom of the Apostle Thomas; though at a very early period, primitive Christianity had been introduced into that country; and though up to the present time, missionary lives and treasures had been lavishly expended, still, comparatively speaking, not more than a mere handful of natives could be claimed as having been converted to Protestantism. Scarcely over 120,000, out of a population of over two hundred millions; and out of these so-called converted natives, there were scarcely 25,000 communicants,* while on the other hand, the progress of Mohammedan missionaries had been most astonishing. They commenced their labors centuries after Christianity had gained a foothold in the East, and now have in that country over twenty-five millions who are followers of the Prophet, and who look toward Mecca instead of toward Benares. But then, it was said, that Mohammedanism was established in India as much by the sword as by any other means,

* Mullen's Census of Indian Missions, taken in 1862, gave European Missions, 408; ordained natives, 81; Catechists, 1079; native churches, 890; native Christians, 118,893; communicants, 21,252; boy scholars, 54,888; girl scholars 14,723. Meagre results indeed!

and yet, wonderful to relate, native Mohammedans are more steadfast to their adopted creed than native Christians, and a Protestant clergyman has asserted that, "as a general thing, the Mohammedans and Hindoos have lived together with remarkable tolerance of each other's antagonistic faiths,"* while it must be reluctantly admitted that, for some reason, there seems to be a strong native prejudice against Christianity; its dictates were considered too overbearing.

Minister of peace, as Mr. Graham was, these startling facts made such an impression as to lead him to think, that where so great a benefit was to be conferred as the establishment of Christianity, and the overthrow of a grossly erroneous system, a little pressure, different from that of moral suasion, might be profitably used with stubborn nations; and he came to the conclusion, that if Christianity were ever to be established in India, such a pressure, sooner or later, would have to be exercised.

Unsuccessful as he had been among uneducated Irish Catholics, his efforts seemed hopeless, until finding that the placid philosophical Brahmins scarcely deigned to reply to what was considered but the puerile arguments of Christians. Obstinate as were the Jews in their disbelief in the Christian Messiah; irreclaimable as were most Roman Catholics, the supreme indifference of Brahmins and Buddhists was most tantalizing. Here, while under the impression that nothing could withstand the arguments of Christian ministers, Mr. Graham found that Brahminical priests, while pointing to their Rig-Veda as the most ancient of all sacred books,† alluded to Christianity, as but a thing of yesterday. They spoke of the "Liliputian chronology" of the Bible as absurd, and of the Bible itself as being only a plagiarized compilation from their own Vedas, from other sacred books, as well as

* Rev. E. D. G. Prime, D.D.

† Max Muller, Professor in Oxford University, and many other learned men, admit that the *Rig Veda* of the Brahmins, is the oldest of all sacred books.

from the sayings and writings of ancient sages, and heathen philosophers; and when he found himself unable to disprove these, and other such bold assertions, he became incensed that such blasphemy could not lawfully be punished in India as in Britain; and, under a feeling of holy indignation, he resolved to leave a land of spiritual darkness, and return to his own country, which was illuminated by the glorious rays of Gospel light.

As he had claimed to have converted a few, even in Ireland, it would not do for Seth Graham to leave the East without being able to exhibit some proof of what had been accomplished through his humble teaching in India. He, like most other missionaries, was under the impression—nay, even confident—that he had done some good among the heathen. It would not do to hear some parsimonious grumblers reassert, that the contributions of Christian people had been again wasted in wild missionary enterprises—no; when he next appeared before the Missionary Board, or on a missionary platform in Ireland, he wished to be able to give undoubted evidence of what the Lord had effected through *his* agency; and who could gainsay his usefulness, if he could bring with his bundle of Hindoo idols, and weapons, and trinkets, two or three living Hindoos as witnesses of what God had wrought through the irresistible power of His word, as dispensed by one of His most unworthy servants? He had an opportunity for doing this. About two weeks before he left Bombay, a native lady called on him, and stated that, in consequence of having expressed a desire to embrace Christianity, she had already suffered much injury—almost persecution—at the hands of her wealthy relatives, and that she had determined, rather than be obliged to conform to the religious practices which she had now abandoned forever, to go to some Christian land, where she could be free to worship as she pleased, without any interference from others; and had, therefore, made up her mind to go to England. She had, she said, been informed that Mr. Graham was about to return to that country, and,

as an evidence of her sincerity, she desired that he should baptize her and her little nephew—a boy of about eight or nine years—to whom she had given Christian instructions, and whom she wished to take with her, as if left in India, he would relapse to Hindooism; and she therefore considered it a sacred duty to save one so dear to her from a superstition which might endanger his eternal happiness. The lady adopted the Christian name of Sarah, and the boy was known as Hemar.

Mr. Graham, delighted with the proposal, not only readily acquiesced, but in order to make sure of such a spiritual prize, he persuaded her to accept his hospitality in the meantime. The native lady, though apparently in good circumstances, was quite willing to become his guest, as she wished to get away as privately as possible; but the little boy, her nephew, was reluctant to go to the house of a stranger; her intention seemed to fret him very much; he spoke of his mother, and wanted to go home—though he then knew not its direction; and were it not for the watchfulness of his aunt, as well as the eager desire of Mr. Graham, he would have made his escape.

Besides these converts Mrs. Graham, the missionary's wife, had a Parsee girl called Sheva that had either been kidnapped, or induced to wander away from her parents' home in Bombay. As it was, Mrs. Graham, being herself childless, seemed to take a rare interest in the girl, and pitying her spiritually destitute condition, not only induced her to become a Christian, but to refuse to return to her parents. Being much depressed at the departure of their child, the parents made every inquiry, and when they discovered, as they supposed, her place of retreat, made a demand that she should be given up. But Mr. Graham and his good wife, having the girl's spiritual interest at heart, denied that she was in their house, and denied all knowledge of her whereabouts, and not only protested against being suspected of keeping her concealed, but threatened to appeal to the law against an impu-

tation so unjust. The parents thus baffled went sadly away; they knew not that their child's affections had been alienated, or that she had been secretly baptized by a Christian priest, and though the same priest might admit that it would be wrong to teach a child to forget its natural parents, he might think it a far greater wrong to allow her to return to those who were unable to give her a knowledge of the true God, and thus imperil her salvation.*

In due time Mr. Graham and his wife with their converts landed in England. The season was chilly, there was snow on the hills, and thin sheets of ice were spread over ponds and pools, and even upon running water. What a change from the hot breath of India! The sight must have been depressing to the natives of the East, for the Hindoo lady appeared to have become suddenly restless and discontented; her natural vivacity had given way to a sullenness of manner which was noticed by all; and her first day in a foreign land had scarcely closed in a dreary night, when, without giving the least intimation, she and her nephew suddenly disappeared. A hurried search had been made, inquiries here and there had been fruitless, no one had seen her, no one could give the least reliable information about such a person, and no clue could be obtained as to her place of retreat. Everything had been managed with such secrecy and tact as to lead one to suppose that she knew Gravesend—the first port at which they touched—and every person in it. Her two trunks and a few valuables had also been removed; and the only hint in any way relating to her which they could get, was from a waterman who stated that about dusk that evening he saw a dark featured, foreign looking woman in conversation with some wandering gypsies who were going towards London. He afterwards saw the same person on one of the river steamers, but she had no boy with her—she was alone—of this he was certain, for being

* See Note 10.

rather puzzled, as he said, by her manner and appearance he watched the steamboat leave the wharf, and he saw the strange woman sit apart from the other passengers, and just as it was growing dark she wrapped a heavy shawl or mantle about her as if preparing to sleep until she got to the city.

Unsatisfactory as this information was, it set the missionary thinking. Who could this woman be? Could it be his lady protege—his Hindoo convert Sarah? If so what a vile deceiver! He then became somewhat excited and felt inclined to curse the whole race of pagans, and to upbraid himself and others for wasting time and money in futile attempts to rescue them from deserved perdition. Sorely annoyed as he then was he could have wished for another Sepoy rebellion in order that it might bring them extermination. After the end of his long voyage he intended to pray that night, and return thanks for their escape from the dangers of the deep; he intended that his converts should have had a touching evidence of his deep piety, but how could he pray now, or for whom? How hard for him to approach the "Throne of Grace" under such circumstances. And yet, after all, he did pray—it had become a habit—but alas! his prayer was not for tender mercies, but for fierce judgment on Pope, and pagan, and infidel, and on those that refuse the gospel. He knew that kings, prophets, and apostles, of old had hurled condemnation upon the heathen; and as these should still be denounced, he urged the Lord to banish unbelief and to thunder in the ears of scoffers the deserved threat: "When your fear cometh as a desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you, then shall ye call upon me, but I will not answer," and after this closing petition the missionary upon the first night of his return retired to slumber, and it might be to dream of converting savages in other lands.

CHAPTER XX.

MORALITY WITHOUT THE BIBLE.

EXPERIENCE has fully proved that ministers of the gospel are no less disconcerted by the trials and disappointments of life than persons who have never had apostolic hands laid upon them. Priests, from the nature of their calling, though presumed to possess more of the virtue of forbearance and resignation than ordinary men, have too often been sadly deficient when required to be an example unto others, and as a class they have never shown themselves superior to common sinners in the hour of trouble, of temptation, or of misfortune. This glaring fact—for fact it is—has emboldened many doubters to assert that religion, in the time of adversity, has never yet surpassed, if it has ever yet equaled, the calm philosophy of sages, ancient and modern, who had neither belief in theological creeds, nor in inspired books.

One might go back to so-called Apostolic times, and allude to the record of the weakness and prevarication of Peter; the infamous betrayal of Judas; the contention between Paul and Barnabas; and the jealousy and dictatorial ambition of Paul himself. The history of the early Christian Fathers, will show a repulsive side of human nature, as exemplified in the wilfully unscrupulous statements and fabrications of such as Ireneus, Tertullian, Origen; Eusebius, and others, who were so thoroughly mendacious in the desire to propagate their crude doctrines, as to justify the remark that "*Omnis homo mendax*," may

be accepted as an inspired aphorism.* Later still, have not the priests of Rome, and of England, and of almost every other country, proved, as a body, to be ambitious and resentful, and the veriest slaves of mystery and intrigue. They have been credulous or doubtful, servile or tyrannical as circumstances permitted or required; and, at the present day, the journalistic record of clerical fallibility and crime, regularly flaunted before the eyes of all—believers and unbelievers—is truly infamous; and yet, notwithstanding all this, the clergy have still the audacity to assert that, without them and their creeds, there could be no more morality, no more faithfulness, no more peace among men; ignoring the fact that their own morality is too questionable, their own faithfulness too unreliable, and their promised peace, but the excited jarring of theological opinions, the hatred of sects, and the persecutions of bigotry. They are evidently desirous of forgetting that the only age of the world which can be truly called the "Pacific Age," was that immediately preceding the period assigned for the birth of the Christian Messiah: a period when the whole world was sunken in so-called "heathenish darkness," yet, withal, no such time has ever since returned to bless mankind.

As history has borne sad evidence in relation to the superiority of the morals and humanity which Christian priests assert must result solely from the adoption of one

* In the early centuries of Christianity, pious misrepresentations were quite common. Following the example of Paul, many of the Christian Fathers did not hesitate to invent and circulate that which was untrue, in order to benefit the Church. The interpolation in Josephus, now admitted by Dr. Chalmers and others to be a forgery, is charged against Eusebius, who was most unscrupulous in furnishing apocryphal testimonials for the support of truth. In the 12th Book of his "Evangelical Preparation," Eusebius devotes a chapter to prove that falsehood ought to be used when required; and he heads the 31st chapter with the question, "How far it may be proper to use falsehood as a medicine?" Referring to the Christian clergy of the fourth century, Dr. Mosheim, the learned divine and historian, admits, "That it was an almost universally adopted maxim, that it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by such means the interests of the Church might be promoted."—Vol. 1, p. 198.

of the most modern creeds, let us glance at what has been said as to the standing and influence of some of those who lived before Christianity was introduced to enlighten the world. It is the fashion of Christian ministers to decry Paganism, and to represent it as a system which has been most debasing in its effects. Like other religious systems, it has its dark side as well as its bright one, yet it is only fair to hear something of what has been said in its favor by men whose opinions candid persons admit to be above suspicion, and whose statements have not as yet been refuted.

Among those ancient pagans, who, according to a common orthodox phrase, "knew not God," the names of many of the finest characters on record are to be found. Without alluding to kings, to soldiers, or to priests—the "dead-heads" of society—who have ever been the prime elements of strife, we find poets, philosophers, orators, musicians, statesmen, physicians, scientists, and astronomers, some of whose pure minds have furnished gems of thought even for the pages of inspiration; while the wonderful talents and surprising intuitions of others, have guided men, in nearly every vocation, through the ages down to the present day. To establish this, it is not necessary to grope into dim antiquity, nor need we seek to discover who it was that suggested the erection of the mighty pyramids of Egypt, or whose grand conceptions gave expression to the once shining face of Memnon, or set up the towering Sphinx, with placid countenance, to gaze for ages upon the flowing Nile, and out upon the desert beyond; neither is it necessary to name the daring architects that excavated the vast cave temples of Ipsamboul, and those of India; that designed the gorgeous palaces, or that raised the immense statues and symmetrical obelisks of ancient Egypt, which, after a lapse of thousands of years, are still the pride and glory of the intellectual world. No; let these dead pagans rest, they were the great preachers of their time, and their texts can still be read in the mountains of sculptured granite, and in the

colossal blocks which they piled and beautified so that future generations might have ample evidence of the depth and sincerity of the faith of those who worshiped Christna or Osiris. Instead of these, let us deal with some of the pagans of subsequent centuries, and name but a few who lived and flourished in the yesterday of time, even as late as a thousand years before the reputed advent of Christ.

It may commence with Homer, the so-called "father of poetry," and who, Sir William Temple says, "was, without doubt, the most universal genius that has ever been known in the world;" and of whose poems it has been said: "It was by these poems that all the worthies of antiquity were formed. Hence the law-givers, the founders of monarchies and commonwealths, took the model of their politics, hence the philosophers drew their first principles of morality, hence physicians have studied diseases and their cures, astronomers have learned the knowledge of the heavens, and geometricians of the earth." Great Homer! who, among the Christian priests and prophets, have ever truly deserved more veneration?

Then, following Homer, what an intellectual array! Thales stands before us chief of the sages, one of whose moral maxims was: "Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing." "Enrich not thyself by unjust means." And Pythagoras, whose teaching, it has been said, "was of the purest and most spiritual kind—self restraint, sincerity, and purity of heart, were especially commended; and conscientiousness and uprightness in the affairs of life would seem to have been its distinguishing characteristics." Among the sayings of this uninspired philosopher are the following words of wisdom: "Do what you believe to be right, whatever people think of you." "It is impossible that he can be free who is a slave to his passions." Then we have Solon, eminently distinguished as a law giver, who said: "Study excellence, and aim at acquiring it." "Those are happy who act honestly and live temperately." "Reverence thy parents." "Cherish

thy friend." Who can equal *Æsop* in philosophical fables? what parables have ever been more useful to mankind? As dramatists, there is *Æschylus* the father of tragedy, and *Thespis* with his wandering troop, and *Euripides*, said to be the author of over ninety tragedies, in which, it is asserted, "He is of all writers remarkable for having interspersed moral reflections and philosophical aphorisms in his dramatic pieces."

In history *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Manetho*, are regarded as being at least as correct and impartial as any modern writers, and as a general thing undeviating in their fidelity to truth. (What of some of our ecclesiastical historians, Protestants and Catholic?)

As orators *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* have never yet been surpassed; they are still the models of statesmen and priests; they continue to dignify politics, and to inspire inspiration.

As mathematicians, *Euclid*, *Archimedes*, and *Eudoxius* still give lessons to some of our professors, and *Hippocrates* is still revered as the father of medicine and "prince of physicians." To these might be added *Aristotle* and others.

But the names of philosophers now perhaps most commonly spoken of are *Confucius* and *Socrates*, to the former of whom is ascribed the authorship of the "Golden Rule," which was centuries afterward transferred to so-called "sacred writ" as an original saying of *Jesus*. Of this great pagan it has been said: "His integrity and the splendor of his virtues made him beloved; kings were governed by his counsels, and the people revered him as a saint;" and of *Socrates*, whose character it is said equalled if not surpassed that of any individual recorded in the Bible. "The purity of his life and his serenity in the hour of death have been the admiration of all, and many prominent Christians take pleasure in associating *Socrates* with *Jesus*." When near his end—having been unjustly condemned to die—he addressed his weeping judges, and, with other exalted remarks, said: "Wherefore, O Judges,

be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the Gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that to die and be released is better for me."* What an example of hope and resignation for orthodox fanatics!

With these we have a Plato, whose "sublime philosophy" has been eulogized by scholars in every age, and whose writings, it is said, "consist in that grand union of abstract thought, imaginative decoration, emotional purity, and noble activity, which is the model of a complete and richly endowed humanity." Read! these are his words: "God is truth, and light is His shadow." "The perfectly just man would be he who should love justice for its own sake, not for the honors or advantages that attend; who would be willing to pass for unjust while he practiced the most exact justice; who would not suffer himself to be moved by disgrace or distress, but would continue steadfast in the love of justice, not because it is pleasant, but because it is right."

These great pagans are but a few of the excellent of the earth, who knew nothing of a "Divine Revelation," but whose great minds conceived a morality never surpassed.† The propagandist priests of Christianity have been ever ready to point out the foibles, and to magnify the errors of these prominent men, and to convict them of licentiousness and inhumanity. They are not free from censure—the wisest men have erred—but they are far from being so depraved as it is the interest of the Church to make them appear. They found it, no doubt, necessary—like some philosophers and scientists at the present day—to show an appearance of conformity to a religion or superstition in which many of them had but little faith,

* Nearly 500 years afterward St. Paul is said to have written: "To die is gain."

† See Note 11.

yet with all the charges that have been urged against them,* they will not appear the more degraded by a contrast of their most glaring errors, or even their imputed crimes, with the gross, debasing licentiousness, and terrible inhumanity of a Moses, an Aaron, a Joshua, a David, and a Solomon; besides a hundred others of the depraved kings, priests, and prophets of the "book of books," whose maxims and whose morals, if exhibited in the lives and actions of men at the present day, would be pronounced contaminating to society. What ideal excellence have we even now that is not in some way a filtration of the grand thoughts, or the development of the embryonic conceptions of the pagan of other days? How far in advance of them are we in mental or material progress? They have scarcely left us anything to originate; our greatest discoveries are perhaps but mere traces of the lost arts. Besides the hundred gates they have thrown open that we may visit an intellectual Thebes, besides the metaphysical hieroglyphics which they have left us to decipher, they have given, with innumerable sages, and many amazing structures, the seven wise men of Greece, and the seven wonders of the world. Pagan and unbelievers! What might the world have gained if there had been more of such? What errors, what inhumanity, what bloodshed, and what sorrow might have been escaped, had men been guided by the simple philosophy of unpretending heathens, instead of having been mystified by creeds, or demoralized by the crude, contradictory bewildering pages of so-called inspiration!

But although these excellent men have long passed away they are still gratefully remembered; no one can fairly establish even a doubt as to their existence. They

* The evidences of Christianity must be in a laboring condition indeed, if they require us to imagine that a Cicero, Tacitus, or Pliny were worshippers of gods of wood or stone; or to force on our apprehensions such a violence as that we should imagine that the mighty mind that had enriched the world with Euclid's Elements of Geometry, could have bowed to the deities of Euclid's Egypt and worshiped leeks and crocodiles.—Rev. R. Taylor "Diegesis," p. 14

were real characters; there was nothing mythical about their race or their origin. Where they lived, and what they said, and what they wrote, are matters of certainty. Can the same assurance ever be given as to the existence of the several "sacred writers," or plagiarists, and prophets, and apostles, and saints, to whom is attributed the authorship of the various books, or tracts, composing the Bible, and whom the orthodox extol above all others as exemplars of virtue? Doubt has ever cast its deepest shadow upon prophecy, and miracle and inspiration. The belief of many unbelievers is mostly a continued struggle with reason. Fiction seems to be the principal constituent of ecclesiastical records. The most deceptive web of error is that which has a golden selvege of truth; and what is theology but a patchwork of truth and fiction, of wisdom and absurdity? In this reasoning, scientific and practical alike, the number is fast increasing who can neither believe in Isaiah's predictions nor in Daniel's wild visions; who cannot conceive that Joshua ever made the sun stand still upon Gibeon, or that the moon ever remained stationary in the valley of Ajalon; who will not believe that the witch of Endor ever raised the prophet Samuel, or that Nebuchadnezzar "ate grass like an ox," or that Baalam's ass ever uttered a word. They consider the legend relating to the labors of Hercules just as credible as the narrative concerning the strength of Sampson; the war with Jupiter and the Giants just as likely to have occurred as the war with Lucifer in heaven; and the story of Phaeton's wild horses rushing toward the earth just as probable as the ascent of Elijah's fiery chariot in the opposite direction; and still in this utter disbelief such skeptics neither expect to become the victims of an incensed Jupiter nor of an incensed Jehovah.

In polemical difficulties, equivocation is often as necessary as pretension for Doctors of Divinity. The virtues of ancient pagans have been so well established that some who boastingly assert that there can be no morality without the Bible, have been obliged to concede—in order

to support this priestly notion—that several of these renowned pagans were actually Christians—yes Christians before Christ!—and the religion which they practised was really Christianity in a kind of disguise. Yet do not many consider that Christianity is even still the disguise of an older creed; still nothing more than the “Buddhism of the West,” for its prominent doctrines are inculcated in the Vedas, and several of the remarkable incidents connected with the life of the Hindoo Savior Christna, are repeated in those which are remarkable in the life of Christ.* As the record of Christna dates back ages before the alleged time of Christ, can it be asked which of the incidents referred to are entitled to priority—which the imitation? Clark, a prominent Christian writer, in his “Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion,” states: “Some of the ancientest writers of the Church have not scrupled expressly to call the Athenian *Socrates*, and some others of the best of the heathen moralists, by the name of CHRISTIANS, and to affirm, that as the law was as it were a schoolmaster to bring the Jews unto Christ, so true moral philosophy was to the Gentiles a preparation to receive the gospel.” P. 284.

Clemens Alexandrinus, one of the early Christians, also says: “And those who lived according to the Logos were really Christians, though they have been thought to be Atheists, as Socrates and Heraclitus were among the Greeks, and such as resembled them.”

And then we have other important admissions of the “Christian Fathers,” and writers, such as that of the shrewd, unscrupulous Origen, who, unable to detract from the excellent lives and maxims of certain heathens, says: “For God revealed these things unto them, and what-

* Such as the incarnation of Christna, born of a virgin, the adoration of shepherds, the escape of the mother and child from the tyrant Kansa, the slaughter of male children by the same tyrant, etc., etc. Sir William Jones, the great writer on India, says: “That the name of Christna and the general outline of his history were long anterior to the birth of our Savior, and probably to the time of Homer, we know very certainly.”

ever things have been well spoken." And Lactantius writes: "And if there had been any one to have collected the truth that was scattered and diffused [by pagans] among sects and individuals, into one, and to have reduced it to a system, there would indeed have been no difference between him and us." "What then? and do the philosophers recommend nothing like the precepts of the gospel? Yes, indeed, they do very many, and often approach to truth; only their precepts have no weight, as being merely human, and devoid of that greater and divine authority; and nobody believes because the hearer thinks himself as much a man as he who prescribes them." Lactant, Libs. 3 and 7.

And of Cicero's works Arnobius says: "And if Cicero's works had been read as they ought to have been by the heathens, there would have been no need of Christian writers." Yet, further, hear the grand admission of St. Augustine: "For the thing itself which is now called the CHRISTIAN RELIGION really was known to the ancients, nor was wanting at any time from the beginning of the human race until the time when Christ came in the flesh, from whence the true religion, which had previously existed, began to be called Christian; and then in our days in the Christian religion, not as having been wanted in former times, but as having in later times received this name."—August. Vol. 1, P. 12.*

These admissions so distinctly stated by leaders in the Christian Church ought to be ample proof that the purest morality existed before the pages of the Bible were known to man. India, said to be the cradle of humanity, civilization, and religion, derived its excellent precepts from the Vedas—the Rig Veda is acknowledged to be the oldest sacred literary work in existence—and from these books

* So pure were the doctrines of many of the ancient philosophers that they were accounted fit to be incorporated with those of Christianity. Mosheim says: "The coalition between Platonism and Christianity, in the second and third centuries, is a fact too fully proved to be rendered dubious by mere affirmations."—Vol. 1, P. 170.

the numerous religions of the world have derived their various "Incarnations," and "Saviors," and "Trinities," and "Plans of Salvation;" from these books all their doctrines have been deduced—this is unquestionable. Sir William Jones, himself a Christian, acknowledged to be perhaps the best authority on India, writes of the primitive religion: "A spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures, pervades the whole work [Institutes of Menu]; the style of it has a certain austere majesty that sounds like the language of legislation, and extorts a respectful awe; the sentiments of independence of all beings but God, and the harsh admonitions even to kings, are truly noble; and the many panegyrics on the *Gnata*, the mother, as it is called, of the *Veda*, proved the author to have adored (not the visible material sun but) that divine and incomparable greater light, to use the words of the most venerable text in the Indian scriptures, which illumines all, delights all, from which all proceed, to which all must return, and which alone can irradiate (not our visual organs merely but) our souls and our intellects."

And John Adams, in a letter to Thomas Jefferson, says: "Where is to be found theology more orthodox or philosophy more profound than in the introduction to the *Shasta*? 'God is one creator of one universal sphere, without beginning, without end. God governs all the creation by a general providence resulting from his eternal designs,' etc. These doctrines—sublime if ever there were any sublime—Pythagoras learned in India, and taught them to Zallucus and his other disciples."

In "Forbes' Oriental Memoirs," the Hindoo character is thus represented: "Piety, obedience to superiors, resignation in misfortune, charity, hospitality, filial, parental and conjugal affection, are among the distinguishing characteristics of the Hindoos."

And Persia, too, had its morality. The *Zend Avesta* is its inspired book, and a Christian bishop speaks thus in

its favor: "The morality of the Zend Avesta is entitled to praise; purity of word, action and thought, is repeatedly inculcated. To multiply the human species, increase its happiness, and prevent evil, are the general duties inculcated by Zoroaster to his disciples; agriculture and the multiplication of the useful arts are particularly recommended to them." *Roman Horæ Biblicæ*. Sir William Jones also adds his testimony: "The primeval religion of Iran, if we may rely on the authorities adduced by Monsani Fani, was that which Newtown calls the oldest (and it may justly be called the noblest) of all religions; a firm belief that 'One supreme God made the world by His power, and continually governs it by His providence; a pious fear, love and adoration of Him; and due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human species; and a compassionate tenderness for the brute creation.'" Here is a text from the book itself: "Opposition to peace is a sin. Reply to thine enemy with gentleness."

China and Japan were rich in moral teachings. Confucius and Mencius, the Chinese philosophers, were apostles of truth who preached a gospel never yet surpassed, and through their maxims have adorned "inspiration," and though they have been canonized by the great high priests of every land, still they made their own destiny subservient to the moral doctrines that existed even before their time. The people of Japan, known as a "friendly race," are approved for their filial conduct, and for their great industry and cleanliness. As to the alleged barbarism of these people, a Rev. gentleman in a work lately published, ironically observes:* "I have wished a hundred times since coming to Japan that we could import into our own and some other civilized countries a measure of this want of civilization, or barbarism, or whatever one may choose to call it." And as to their shameful treatment by Christian nations, he says: "The

* Rev. E. D. G. Prime, D.D.—"Around the World." 1872.

Christian world owes a heavy debt to those heathen nations which have suffered so much at the hands of Christian journalists."

Egypt, ancient Egypt, may well boast of civilization; the most obstinate clerical fanatic can do but little indeed with the puny opposition he might bring against the claims of this once great nation. It may be said that, in many respects, Egypt towers above most other countries, just as the pyramid towers above the desert. Of this land, Rollin the historian, writes: "Egypt was ever considered by all the ancients as the most renowned school for wisdom and politics, and the source from whence most of the arts and sciences were derived. This kingdom bestowed its noblest labors and its finest arts on the improvement of mankind; and Greece was so sensible of this, that its most illustrious men, as Homer, Pythagoras, Plato, even its great-legislators, Lycurgus and Solon, with more whom it is useless to mention, traveled into Egypt to complete their studies, and to draw from that fountain whatever was most rare and valuable in every kind of learning."

As for Greece, and Rome, all history bears evidence to their past greatness. Nearly every one of their pagan heroes and heroines seem to have been characters of the highest human excellence. They were not frightened into virtue by theology.

Where can we find men more desirous of doing justice and benefiting the human race than Socrates or Plato, or more exemplary than Lycurgus or Cincinnatus? Where can we find chastity to surpass that of Lucretia; or honesty that of Aristides; or disinterestedness that of Timoleon? And now, after all the wild shouting of our modern clergy, have their contending creeds produced better results for the world at large than those arising from paganism or unbelief? Are Christian priests better men than their pagan predecessors? Have the Christian clergy shown more self-denial, or more disregard for wealth, and position, and authority than the expounders of the Vedas, the

Zend Avesta, or even the Koran? And the great question on the whole may be, has Christianity, alone and unaided, made men more intelligent, more truthful, more perfect, more dignified, more contented and more humane than paganism left them; has it, as the popular religion of Europe and America, diminished more poverty and crime, or lessened the evils of war, or produced a higher regard for human life; has the slaughter almost constantly occurring during the last eighteen hundred years, equalled or exceeded that under paganism during any previous period of the same duration? Enormous as the cost of the Christian religion is at the present day—extortionate assessments or demands to pay the ecclesiastical incomes of popes, cardinals, arch-bishops, deans, rectors, moderators, curates, and the remaining vast swarm of the clergy of all denominations seeking maintenance; incessant demands for the erection of grand cathedrals and palatial churches, and for the circulation of Bibles and tracts; and increasing demand for missionary and other similar purposes—enormous as these assessments and demands really are, they, after all, fall short of the millions required and expended by Christian nations for the dreadful purposes of war; the Christian clergy, who assume to be men of peace, or who contribute little or nothing to the taxes imposed for the creating and support of hostile fleets and invading armies, are yet among the first to urge others to engage in bloody strife, and submit to the exaction, even though asylums, and hospitals, and charitable institutions, should at the same time be languishing for necessary supplies. Doubters will still ask: What has Christianity done for the nations? What is Athens now to what it was in the the time of Pericles? Whether was Rome greatest in its Augustan, or in its Pontifical age.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming evidence which can be adduced to prove that the standard of morality is but little, if at all, in advance of what it was eighteen hundred years ago, celestial envoys such as Seth Graham,

Missionary unable to disprove the existence of justice, and integrity at that period, will pertinaciously assert that the minds of men in the early ages had been impregnated with the morality of the Old Testament, without which mankind would have been in the most deplorable condition. Old Testament! It were, perhaps, better not to give special instances of what that morality consisted; it were better not to quote from the "inspired" record of the loves of some of the elect of those terrible times, their obscenities, their inhumanities or their savage, wanton butcheries. Morality? Shocking! One instance may suffice; read the life of the "Psalmist"—called, "the man after God's own heart," and if any pagan, since or before his respected time, has proved more wicked, more sensual, more abandoned, more treacherous, and more inhumanly cruel than the illustrious King David, then history is but fable.

To be plain, nothing but the most daring disregard for strict accuracy, or the most overwhelming idea of self-righteousness, can still urge certain ministers of the gospel to repudiate the goodness that is natural to mankind; for it is positively false to assert that man is by nature either "totally depraved," or "devilish." After all the foolish cavilling as to the existence of morality without the Bible, Christian writers of undoubted authority admit and fully prove that the excellence of the morality of the ancient world was alone sufficient for the guidance of men—the ethics of "inspiration" being no way superior, and certainly not original. Those who lived in the early ages of the world were possible of human feelings as well as of human forms; they had an affectionate regard for their parents, their wives and their children; they could be faithful to their friends and magnanimous to enemies; they could pity the suffering, could weep with those that wept, and shed tears of sorrow over the graves of those who had departed; they were as industrious, as kind, as benevolent, as humane, and altogether as virtuous as people of modern times; there was then, perhaps, even

less selfishness among men than there is at present. It is stated that: "Among the primitive nations of the world alms-giving was inculcated as a religious observance, and is prescribed as such in their religious books." "In early times Athens could boast of having no citizen in want, nor did any disgrace the nation by begging." An Athenian decree provided for the maintenance of those who had been mutilated in battle, and for the children of those who fell. Among the Romans charitable legislation was frequent; the holding of land was limited as to extent, and those who had none got a portion to cultivate. (How much such legislation is needed at the present day!) Grain was distributed to the poor, first at a reduced rate, but afterwards gratuitously; and it is said that the most distinguished Roman senators exercised their patience by speaking in public in behalf of the poor and oppressed; and while the most humble citizen was not forgotten by the nation, children were trained to be regardful of their parents, and education was considered highly necessary.

As the dissension and cruel strife long existing among the different Christian denominations are a matter of world-wide notoriety, it may now be well to inquire how the pagan or philosophical sects of ancient times held together. The following extracts relating to those people are admitted to be correct. Gibbon, the historian, says: "In their writings and conversation the philosophers of antiquity asserted the independent dignity of reason; but they resigned their actions to the command of law and custom. Viewing with a smile of pity and indulgence the various errors of the vulgar, they dilligently practiced the ceremonies of their fathers, devoutly frequented the temples of the gods; and sometimes condescending to act a part in the theatre of superstition, concealed the sentiments as an atheist under the sacerdotal robe. It was indifferent to them what shape the folly of the multitude might choose to assume; and they approached with the same inward contempt and the same external reverence to the altars of the Lybian, the Olympian, of the Capito-

line Jupiter." Mosheim, the Christian historian, also says: "One thing indeed, appears at first sight very remarkable—that the variety of religions and gods in the heathen world, neither produced wars nor dissensions among the different nations." "Each nation suffered its neighbors to follow their own method of worship, to adore their own gods, to enjoy their own rites and ceremonies, and discovered no displeasure at the diversities of sentiments in religious matters. They all looked upon the world as one great empire, divided into various provinces, over every one of which, a certain order of divinities presided, and that, therefore, none could behold with contempt the gods of other nations or force strangers to pay homage to theirs."

And alluding to the toleration allowed in the ancient Roman empire, Mosheim further adds: "The Romans exercised this toleration in the amplest manner, for though they would not allow any change to be made in the religion of the empire, nor any new form of worship to be openly introduced, yet they granted to their citizens a full liberty of observing in private, the sacred rites of other nations, and of honoring foreign deities (whose worship contained nothing inconsistent with the interests and laws of the republic) with feasts, temples, consecrated groves and the like testimonials of homage and respect." (Ecc. hist.)

And Renan says: "We may search in vain the Roman law before Constantine for a single passage against freedom of thought, and the history of the imperial government furnishes no instance of a prosecution for entertaining an abstract doctrine." (Hist. Apostles, p. 259.) What a sad contrast with the toleration of Christian governments.

Mosheim thus inquires: "A very natural curiosity calls us to inquire how it happened that the Romans who were troublesome to all nations on account of its religion, and who suffered even the Jews to live under their own laws and follow their own method of worship, treated the

Christians alone with such severity. A principal reason of the severity with which the Romans persecuted the Christians notwithstanding these considerations, seems to have been the abhorrence and *contempt* felt by the latter for the religion of the empire, which was so intimately connected with the form and indeed with the very essence of its political constitution; for though the Romans gave an unlimited toleration to all religions which had nothing dangerous to the commonwealth, yet they would not permit that of their ancestors which was established by the laws of the land, to be turned into *derision*, nor the people to be drawn away from their attachment to it." (Ecc. Hist.)

The *ten* persecutions alleged to have taken place under Roman emperors are now admitted by impartial Christian historians to be ten exaggerations. Even allowing that there were twenty such persecutions what would the total number destroyed be, compared to the actual thousands slaughtered by Christians in contesting some particular Christian doctrine; how few compared to the vast number by Christians during the crusades; and when we consider the millions destroyed to establish Papal supremacy, and the number of Protestants slaughtered by Protestants, the Christians destroyed by Roman persecutions would be an almost insignificant collection.

Referring to the *ten* persecutions which certain Christian writers assert had taken place, Gibbon says; "The ingenious parallels of the *ten* plagues of Egypt, and the *ten* horns of the Apocalypse, first suggested this calculation to their minds." And a late writer says: "In the fourth century, no settled theories of the number of persecutions seems to have been adopted, Lactantius reckons up but six." (Cham. Enc.)

If the following account is reliable what a fiendish system an intelligent pagan must consider Christianity: From the rise of popery in 606, to the present time, it is estimated by careful and credible historians that more than FIFTY MILLIONS of the human family have been

slaughtered for the crime of heresy—an average of more than *forty thousand religious murders* for every year of the existence of Popery." In a note added to this we have stated: "A MILLION of Waldenses perished in France; NINE HUNDRED THOUSAND orthodox Christians were slain in less than thirty years after the institution of the order of Jesuits. The Duke of Alva boasted of having put to death in the Netherlands THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND by the hand of the common executioner during the space of a few years. The Inquisition destroyed, by various tortures, ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND within thirty years."*

Now, if we had the "actual figures" of those who have been unmercifully dealt with by fanatical Protestants—of those who have been persecuted by Puritans, and tortured by "Pilgrim Fathers," or butchered by other furious zealots of the Reformed Church, would not the great aggregate of victims be woeful? Is there no one who can weep for the crimes of this Christian Church? Is there no one who can blush for its still shameless pretensions? Hush—what a fearful picture! Is there no one who can blot out this infernal record against outraged humanity?

Alluding to the manner in which heathenism is generally spoken of by Christian ministers and people, the Rev. Robert Taylor remarks: "As it would not be fair to take up our notion of the Christian religion, from the lowest and most ignorant of its professors, and still less perhaps, to estimate its merits, by the representations which its known and avowed enemies would be likely to give; the balance of equal justice on the other side, will forbid ever forming our estimate of the ancient paganism from the misconceptions of its unworthy votaries, or the interested detractions and exaggerations of its Christian opponents.

The only just and honorable estimate will be that which shall judge of paganism as Christians would wish their own religion to be judged—by its absolute documents, by

* Dowley's Hist. of Romanism, p. 542, and note Scott's Ch. Hist.

the representations of its advocates, and the admissions of its adversaries.

When it is borne in mind that a supernatural origination or divine authority is not claimed for these systems of theology, there can be no occasion to fear their rivalry, or encroachment on systems founded on such a claim; and still less to decry witchcraft, and scandalize them, as any means of exalting or magnifying those. There cannot be the least doubt that in dark and barbarous ages, the rude and unlettered part of mankind would grossly pervert the mythical or allegorical sense, if such there were, in the forms of religion propounded to their observance or impose on their simplicity, while it is impossible that those enlightened and philosophical characters, who have left us in their writings the most undoubted evidence of the greatest shrewdness of intellect, extent of inquiry and goodness of heart, should have understood their theology in no better or higher significance than as it was understood by the ignorant of their own persuasion, or would be represented by their enemies, who had the strongest possible interest in defaming and decrying it. When the worst is done in this way, Christianity would be but little the gainer by being weighed in the same scales. Should we be allowed to fix on the darkest day of her eleven hundred years of dark ages, and to pit the grossest notion of the grossest ignorance of that day, as specimens of Christianity, against the views which Christians have been generally pleased to give as representations of paganism, how would they abide the challenge? Look on this picture and on this."

Notwithstanding all that has been done by missionaries, notwithstanding the "running to and fro," "the preaching of repentance," and the scattering of thousands of Bibles all over the earth, the Brahmin is still steadfast in his faith and he still prizes the morality and the beautiful precepts of the Vedas when he can read therein: "He who gives alms goes to the highest place in heaven; he goes to the gods." "Any place where the

mind of man can be undisturbed is suitable for the worship of the Supreme Being." The vulgar look for their gods in water; the ignorant think they reside in wood, bricks, and stones; men of more extended knowledge seek theirs in celestial orbs; but wise men worship the universal soul." "The way to eternal beatitude is open to him who without omission speaketh the truth." "As a thousand rays emanate from one flame, thus do all souls emanate from the One Eternal Soul, and return to him."

And the Buddhist disregarding all other creeds, believes that he has all truth when he reads in the sacred word of Buddha. "As the bee collects nectar, and departs without injuring the flower, or its color, or perfume, so let the sage dwell on earth." "Like a beautiful flower, full of color, but without perfume, are the fine but fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly." "As on a heap of rubbish cast upon the highways, the lily will grow, full of sweet perfumes and delightful, thus the disciple of the truly enlightened Buddha shines forth by his knowledge among those who are like rubbish, among the people that walk in darkness." "Cut out the love of self like autumn lotus, with thy hand! Cherish the road to peace." "He whose evil deeds are covered by good deeds brightens up this world like the moon free from clouds."

O, philosophers, can ye tell who alone has wisdom? O, ye priests of a hundred sects, if ye cannot reconcile your conflicting creeds, can ye prove to the world who alone has truth?

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CHAPTER XXI.

TRICKS OF TRADE.

AFTER every hurried search and inquiry for the fugitives had proved ineffectual, Seth Graham, Missionary, in spite of his holy calling, felt greatly annoyed, by the treacherous disappearance of his fancied converts. A short time before he had left Bombay he had written to one of the principal secretaries of the Missionary Society in Ireland, mentioning the necessity of his early return on account of the ill health of himself and his wife, and he had also given a rather generous account of his success among the heathen. He modestly intimated that many of the natives had already given the most touching expressions of regret at his intended departure, and that living evidences of his spiritual triumphs would, he trusted, soon be exhibited on a missionary platform in both England and Ireland. Upon receipt of this intelligence, certain ministers at home took the earliest opportunity of announcing the same from their pulpits, and certain of the missionary-mad, both lay and clerical, rubbed their hands in joyful anticipation of the rich treat that was in store for pious free-givers; and these ministers also trusted to have an opportunity of witnessing the discomfiture of the penurious few who were always throwing doubts upon the utility of missions to the heathen, and predicting that future results among such would be no better than the past.

Seth Graham well knowing, from the nature of his

communication to his friends at home, that such announcement would be made to expectant congregations, was really mortified at the manner in which he felt himself jilted, as it were, just as he fancied himself almost certain of receiving the honors of a clerical triumph, and it sorely puzzled his inventive faculty to find a way out of the awkward position in which he had been placed by the desertion and evident apostasy of the Hindoo woman, who, he expected, would corroborate his assertions as to the necessity for missions to India, as to the increasing power of the gospel, and the extended influence of Christianity among those who were once worshipers of wood and stone; and he of course also expected that she would point to him before all as, in a manner, her spiritual deliverer from the demons of a cruel and debasing superstition.

That person is scarcely mortal who is entirely indifferent to praise from his fellow man, particularly when, in his own opinion, he has done something, little or much, to deserve it. Praise is an honorary reward suitable to persons of every degree; it is the sunshine in which the humble can bask as well as the exalted, and Mr. Graham, like most other ministers of the gospel, under the impression that his peculiar talents had advanced "the cause," had a yearning for popularity, and would like to be hailed in a well crowded church, or to stand uncovered before a fashionable assembly of wealthy Christians, and to receive their well earned plaudits. Many a night during his long voyage home, did this retiring missionary comfort himself with the idea of such a reception, even in his dreams he could often hear the congratulations of his friends, and at times in his night visions, he could see the beautiful faces and glowing smiles of the Christian ladies who seemed to flutter around him like celestial butterflies, while he in his humble pride sat perched like a bird of Paradise upon one of the highest branches of the towering cedars of Lebanon. And often, during the day, many an hour would be spent while he and his wife would converse about such pleasing probabilities in anticipation of an

agreeable reunion; for with the credentials which he had now in his possession, was it possible that he could expect any thing else than the most distinguished greeting?

But now, alas, what a change! Seth Graham sat aside by himself like one in despair, totally crest-fallen; he spoke but little to his wife or to any one else, while she, poor woman, tried to assure him by stating that perhaps the Hindoo lady might have had some reason to remain behind for a time, and that in all probability both she and her nephew would proceed after them to Ireland. Mrs. Graham recommended her husband to leave his address and to ask some pious friends in the neighborhood to keep a look out for the fugitives, and if they should be discovered to urge them to follow. The missionary had, however, but little hope; he had a strong impression that he had been grossly deceived, and that neither he nor his wife would ever again lay eyes on the absconding converts. He had intended to make a short stay in London, but under the present circumstances he thought it best to go on at once to Ireland, and in the meantime he would try and frame some excuse for the non-appearance of his Hindoo friends, and put the best face on the matter by making the most he could of the Parsee girl, Sheva.

Perplexed, however, as he had been, his reception in Belfast was after all most gratifying. It had been made known through certain Presbyterian journals and other Protestant papers, that the Rev. Seth Graham—they used the objectionable prefix, Reverend—the self-sacrificing missionary, was soon expected; that he had been obliged to leave India in consequence of impaired health; that during his stay in that oppressive climate, he had been unceasing in his arduous labors, and as a proof of his great success, would bring to his native country certain converted Pagans whom he had turned from idolatry to the worship of the true God. This report having been thoroughly circulated by pulpit and press, in less than a week after his arrival, an immense assemblage greeted him in one of the largest churches in Belfast. There

might not, perhaps, have been so many persons present on this great occasion had it not been well understood that Seth Graham would, in person, present to the people the Hindoo and the Parsee converts, who, it was said, had urgently solicited him to take them to his own country; and though for several days before the evening on which the exhibition was to take place, many of the ministers had been informed that the Hindoo woman had been obliged to remain for a time in England, and that only the Parsee girl would appear, yet this information was not made known to the public; it was considered an innocent stroke of policy to keep this to themselves, else the sight-seers might be disappointed and the want of this great attraction might bring them but a very meagre attendance, and the amount to be collected for future missionary operations might be scarcely more than enough to defray the expenses of the evening.*

For a day or two before the meeting Seth Graham and his wife did their best to make their Parsee convert, Sheva, understand what she was required to do and say on the coming occasion, and the girl being sufficiently intelligent, was not a little gratified at the important part which she was expected to sustain.

The evening came at last; the missionary platform was as usual occupied by several ministers and wealthy friends of the gospel, and the church was crowded with well dressed ladies, whose aid on such occasions is of singular potency. The secretary read the report. A very large sum had been collected during the past year, and though several extra expenses had been incurred, still the amount received had been a little more than sufficient to meet all demands; this was most gratifying, and reflected the greatest credit upon the Reverend managers. The greatest economy had, however, to be practised, the cause was

* A Methodist minister not long since in announcing from the pulpit that a missionary meeting would be held, stated—as an attraction—that certain very prominent and influential preachers would be present, when he well knew at the time that they could not attend.

one of the noblest—indeed the very noblest—in which man could be engaged. The conversion of the heathen was a charge left by the Great Ruler to Christian men, and God would hold his ministers responsible for the performance of this most important duty; and those members of the Church who had wealth at their disposal would be called to a dread account on the day of General Judgment if they selfishly withheld the means so particularly needed for Missions. It might be, and it had been alleged that there was both poverty and ignorance in their own country, but poverty could be borne; penury never yet jeopardized a man's soul—ignorance of God's Holy Word must result in eternal misery. It had been stated that Ireland was afflicted with Popery, and that the ignorance and servility resulting from it were fraught with danger to free institutions, and many believed it to be as great an evil to society in general as the most degrading superstition of India. These objections, now becoming so frequent, were really superficial; while being urged as having a basis of reason, they were simply side blows against foreign missions; but as long as God's ministers were aware of their vast responsibility they would never cease to urge Christian men to hold out the glorious Bible, that grand old beacon light, to the millions of human beings struggling in the black darkness of Paganism. Popery, though comparatively an evil, was not perhaps entirely fatal to all who had a sincere belief in its efficacy. The most eminent Protestant reformers had admitted that Romanism had some portion of truth; that while papists bowed to images, kissed relics, and worshiped the Virgin, they still worshiped the Son, the Savior of men, and that therefore those who had even a corrupt Christianity were better off than those who had no Christianity at all.*

* At a missionary meeting held at Toronto, Canada, in the "Metropolitan" Wesleyan church, January 6th, 1873, Rev. Dr. Punshon said: "He desired active sympathy for this Japanese mission. The missionary cause was the gauge of a church's health and vigor, and he could point in the direction of that distant land for their help as indicated almost by Divine intelligence. He had a warm regard for

After two or three ministers had reiterated the sentiments expressed in the report, Mr. Graham, in apparent good health, was received with cheers. The address which he had prepared gave the usual orthodox repetition of the condition of the heathen world, of their ignorance, their superstition, and their degradation. The Brahmins were said to be impostors, the Buddhists were illiterate, the Mohammedans fiendish, and the people generally ignorant, squalid, poverty stricken, and brutal. He had seen unfortunate widows forced to sacrifice themselves in the Suttee, had seen fanatics immolate themselves under the car wheels of Juggernaut, and had seen naked, raving fakirs almost tear the flesh from their very bones; the people on the whole were in a most deplorable condition; there was neither charity, nor chastity, nor scarcely human feeling among them, they were simply sensual and devilish; though many of them pretended an aversion to good beef, yet he feared that many others were little better than cannibals; and, were it not for British control, human life would be insecure; were it not for self-sacrificing missionaries, were it not for such resolute spirits as Carey, and Duff, and Ward, Satan would reign triumphant over the whole land. Dark, however, as this picture was, he assured them that the Gospel was doing wonders in India; thousands were casting aside their idols, and were now willing to serve the true God. He had hoped, he said, to be able to give them the assurances of adult persons who—he humbly said it—had been led to the truth by his instrumentality, but as the Hindoo lady and her nephew, who had accompanied him from India, had been obliged to remain for a time in England, he trusted to be able, on some future occasion, to induce her to tell them of her change of heart, and of what God's word had done for her

the Home missions and especially those for Lower Canada (for the conversion of French Catholics) but he held that they were better off who had a corrupt Christianity than those who had no Christianity at all." Strange that other Protestant ministers should assert Popery to be a more dangerous error than Paganism or even unbelief.

and hers. In conclusion, he urged them to be true to the great missionary cause, and not to forget the millions under condemnation of original sin, who were yet spiritually destitute, but to strengthen God's hand by sending out, at any cost, or at any sacrifice, zealous servants of the Lord to the perishing heathen.

Like most of the assertions made upon missionary platforms, there was, of course, some truth in the observations of Mr. Graham, and much exaggeration, which was really more telling upon the rather credulous assemblage than truth itself; and then to heighten the effect of what had been stated, a few idols and trinkets were exhibited, and after this the Parsee girl was smilingly led forward for the edification of all. Sheva was dressed in her native costume, she was decorated with a profusion of rings and jewelry, much of which was extraneous, added by Mrs. Graham, in her simple desire to produce an effect. The girl's appearance was graceful, and her manner innocent, and when she stood out before all, there was much pushing, and crowding, and stretching of necks, and she seemed somewhat abashed until Mr. Graham whispered a few words in her ear, and while he still held her hand, she spoke a few words in broken English—which she had been made to practice for the occasion:

"Me Christin friends, me little Parsee girl very glad to see you all. Me love you all in dis place in Irelan', an' in Englan' too. Me greatly love my good fader Grame, an' my good mudder Grame wid him too. Me love de Lor', an' you love de Lor' too. Me leave my friends an' my nice home to come here wid my good fader an' my good mudder Grame, me can't not stay without dem. I love de Lor', an' I love you all in my heart. Tink of my poor friends in Bombay, send dem de missoner, an' send dem de wor' of de Lor', too."

After the delivery of this rehearsed prattle in a very hesitating manner, the girl made a low bow, and was led aside by her "good fader Grame," while the audience, as if struck with wonder at this evidence of precocity so

evangelical, awarded her their warm and grateful applause.

It is sufficient to say that this meeting was considered a great success; a large sum had been collected to advance "the cause" in India, even to send a missionary in the place of Mr. Graham. He himself was in an excellent mood, and so highly favored was he, that in a few days after this missionary reception, he had the good fortune to be inducted as minister to a congregation in Belfast. Being still of a restless disposition, and grown rather more aggressive, simple preaching was not sufficient to satisfy his clerical longings for notoriety. Popery still raised its audacious head in his native land, and now again he thought that a temporizing government had not only tolerated this evil, but had actually sustained it and its Maynooth professors by public grants; that it was the duty of every loyal Protestant—especially of protestant ministers—to proclaim increasing hostility against everything Popish; and, as he had learned by experience, that it was almost useless to produce what he and many others deemed unanswerable texts and arguments, either against the man of sin, or against many of the prevailing theological errors, he believed that something more like muscular arguments were indispensable, and as Orangeism had a leaning in that direction, he became a member of that society, and was soon afterward elected a kind of district chaplain, and in his visits to sundry lodges, he caused much excitement and evoked a strong anti-Popish spirit at a time when the government was most anxious to suppress Orange celebrations, particularly in Ireland; and in defiance of proclamations, either from the Lord Lieutenant, or from the Queen herself, he continually urged the Orangemen to be true to their principles, and not be afraid of either Pope or devil, to turn out, one and all, and display their colors upon the ever glorious Twelfth.

CHAPTER XXII.

WAVERING FAITH.

WELL, on the day after the late Orange celebration, Seth Graham, weather bound like others, stood gloomily at his window, looking up occasionally at the Divis ridges now dimly visible in the leaden sky, and then at the lowering clouds; he was annoyed by the continuous rain, now streaming down, now lightening a little but to disappoint him again; he wished like others to get out and to have an opportunity of visiting some of his wounded friends, and like others perhaps to feast his eyes upon the blackened ruins of the Popish church.

His wife, a delicate looking little woman, sat near him, they had been conversing about the unhappy incidents of the Twelfth. She, of a gentle and humane disposition, had utterly disapproved of the bloodshed that had taken place, and of the destruction of the building. He, in evident angry mood, had justified all, and while he had been denouncing Romanism, and uttering the most uncharitable sentiments against that system, the Parsee girl, Sheva, who had been sitting half asleep on the carpet in the middle of the room, had listened to his loud words and seemed surprised at his vehemence. She looked from one to the other, now at Mrs. Graham's thin, pale face, now at Graham who with gloomy expression still looked out at the window; and she glanced at him from time to time as if partly afraid of her spiritual parent. He was a man of medium height, rather slightly built, his face was sallow,

his eyes dark and sunken, and his lank black hair, now touched with grey, was parted in the middle, giving him a kind of sanctimonious appearance. He was one whose religious zeal was an over match for his discretion, and like certain biblical heroes, he could ignore human impulses and commit an atrocious act were he under the impression that by so doing he was performing the Lord's work or serving His cause. As he had hitherto done little either among Catholics in Ireland or Hindoos in India, he now felt it his duty to re-commence an agitation against Popery. His opinions had greatly changed as to the method of procedure with false systems. About the time of his ordination he believed in argument and moral suasion, but now after his return and his long experience he was inclined to believe that where reason and argument were ineffective to crush down error, actual force if need be should be used. And though he was ready to preach against the Inquisition and Papal persecution, he would not hesitate to use any means—even the most violent—to undermine Popery and to prostrate the man of sin. The pure gospel he believed could and would do much, and faith alone could remove mountains. There was a time in his life when Seth Graham verily believed that prayer with faith was all that was necessary to accomplish anything—even to enable the believing Christian to perform actual miracles—to walk upon the water, to remove the mountains, or to raise the dead. He had known many sterling believers who would exultingly tell of the faith "of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets," and who at the same time believed that the promise was still for them, and that, even in these latter times, they could through faith, quench the violence of fire, escape the edge of the sword, and put to flight armies of aliens—but alas! in his long experience the reliance of Seth Graham had been somewhat shaken, for he had seen many of such who, while vainly hoping to the last, still "died in the faith, not having received the promises."

It was to him, then, one of the most perplexing mysteries of theology why there should be promises so positive and yet so unreliable. Had he not prayed for the downfall of Popery, for the conversion of the heathen, and for the speedy and general spread of the gospel—all as it seemed to little purpose. Popery, he admitted, appeared to be sinking under the weight of its own infamy, but as for the real and permanent conversion of Pagans, notwithstanding all that had been done he had but little hopes; and though he still believed in the efficacy of frequent prayer, and had still some trust in gospel promises, he was verily of opinion that other means were necessary, and in order to remove the mountain, faith must be aided by some lever more powerful than an ordinary invocation. These were his own private views which it would never, never answer to publish to the world. Esoteric opinions so dangerous might be whispered only to certain of the initiated; he was cautious enough to breathe them only to his wife.

"I tell you what, Anne," he continued, addressing Mrs. Graham, "forbearance may be a virtue, but after one exhausts every text in the Bible against Popery, and finds it to little purpose, I believe in taking other means. I don't regret the killing off of a score or two of Papists should it serve as an example—they were the aggressors. I don't care for the destruction of their Mass House if it is likely to effect any good; and I wouldn't care a straw if, before the next Twelfth of July, every Popish temple in the kingdom was tumbled to the ground. That's the right way to deal with false systems. Psha! for prayer and moral force with such glaring frauds on Christianity! Naked heathenism is nearer the truth."*

"But that's not the scriptural way, Seth, to deal with error," said his wife in a tone of mild reproof.

"Yes, yes, the scriptural way, the true Bible method," retorted Mr. Graham. "The only way to eradicate evil sometimes is to destroy it root and branch."

* See Note 12.

"I doubt it, Seth, I doubt it; God would be more merciful," again urged Mrs. Graham.

"Would He? Through the mouth of Moses did not the Lord God say to idolators: 'They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischief upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. *They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction. I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of grey hairs.*'* There's scripture for you, wife. What can you say to that?"

"If it is, Seth," said Mrs. Graham after a little reflection, "the Lord is patient and long suffering. It is not His pleasure to destroy."

"Is it not?" said Mr. Graham sharply. "Let us see. How did he treat the rebellious under Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? 'The earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up. And there came out a fire from the Lord and consumed two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.'† And those of the congregation that afterwards murmured against Moses for this dispensation were cut off at once by a plague to the number of fourteen thousand and seven hundred."‡ He paused for a moment, but his wife made no reply. "And further," continued he, "did not the Lord order the destruction of the Midianites? Hear the word: 'And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites. And they warred against the Midianites as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. And they slew the

* Deuteronomy, Chap. 32, v. 21 to 25.

† Numbers, Chap. 16, v. 32 and 35.

‡ Numbers, Chap. 16, 49.

kings of Midian, besides the rest of them that were slain; namely Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hūr, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword. And the children of Israel took *all* the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt and all their goodly castles, with fire.' This, Anne, was the Lord's method of retaliation; even afterwards when the conquerors returned to the presence of Moses he asked them: "Have ye saved all the women alive?" and being of course answered in the affirmative, what was the further command? 'Now, therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women-children that have not known a man, by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.* There, Anne, that's scripture also, and none can deny it, and if, to a limited extent, following the example of the select children of God, we had destroyed in self-defence a score or so of idolatrous papists, and burnt one of their strongholds, I ask if we have not sufficient authority for cutting off the enemies of the Lord and of his people?"

After another pause Mrs. Graham slowly replied: "Yet I would in these days let the Lord, if He so wills, be His own avenger."

"In these days?" sharply replied Mr. Graham, who seemed to grow more determined. "All time is alike to the Lord; He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, without variableness or shadow of turning, and what He did in olden time He will do again." He cared not to show relenting pity to transgressors—He gave them the full measure of justice. His command is positive: 'And thine eye shall not pity, *but* life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.† The thous-

* Numbers, Chap. 31 to v. 18.

† Deuter. Chap. 19, v. 21.

ands slaughtered under Moses, and Aaron, and Joshua, besides those under David and Solomon, and others of his pious servants, were cut off as a necessity. The Lord knew best how to deal with His enemies when He commanded 'But thou shalt utterly destroy them, namely, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.*' Terrible as the unsanctified declare these mandates, the Lord well knew that showing mercy to enemies is often the grossest injustice towards friends."

Poor Mrs. Graham listened in silence, she made no reply, she dared not exclaim against the dreadful quotations she had just heard; she dared not murmur against the very words of inspiration. Though the record seemed inhuman, she would fain believe that the Lord was after all of more tender mercy and compassion than even the word itself had made Him. And struggling between her humanity and her creed—between her benevolent impulses and her rigid faith—she could have wept that those unfortunately in error and unbelief, were still under the curses of the law and doomed to an eternity of misery.

Mr. Graham, noticing her depression, continued in a milder tone:

"I tell you what, Anne, these denunciations may seem hard, but are not the words of the Lord as wise as they are inscrutable? If the heart becomes like adamant, it must be broken by heavy strokes; if line upon line, and precept upon precept remain unheeded, other means must be used to overthrow error. It has been so from the beginning, and will be so to the end of time. Why, one might have preached for an eternity in India, and the Suttee would still remain an established usage, were it not for the penalties of a prohibitory law; and here in Ireland we may scatter Bibles and tracts by the thousand, and the abominations of Popery will continue unless true

* Deuter., Chap. 20, v. 17.

believers, and loyal men, rise in their might and crush them under foot."

During most of this conversation, Sheva remained sitting on the carpet, and her large, lustrous eyes seemed occasionally to grow larger while hearing a rehearsal of barbarities such as shocked her naturally tender feelings. For Mrs. Graham, she had a warm affection, but the cold, harsh, stern manner of Mr. Graham caused her to feel at times a dread of his presence; for lately he had grown indifferent toward the little foreigner, and his treatment of her was sometimes more than unkind, as if she had become a useless burden. Whatever means had been taken to induce Sheva to leave her home, the girl now appeared to have discovered that she had done very wrong, and at times she cried bitterly for her parents, uttering their names in the most affectionate manner, and pleading to be taken home again. While she had the companionship of the Hindoo boy, Hemar, to whom she was much attached, she did not complain so often, but since the disappearance of him and his aunt, she had become more discontented, and were it not for the motherly kindness of Mrs. Graham, she would have been very unhappy. Even as it was, the minister's wife regretted the part she had once conscientiously taken in aiding to induce Sheva to leave her native country, and were an opportunity to offer, she would now have willingly made a sacrifice to send her back.

After Mr. Graham had ceased to quote any further Scriptural denunciations against the so-called enemies of the Lord, Mrs. Graham, who had noticed Sheva's disquietude, took her hand and led her out of the room into another apartment. Sheva had a little room to herself, up stairs, and there she and Mrs. Graham often sat together. Mrs. Graham, who took an interest in trying to explain the Scriptures to her young charge, often found it difficult to satisfy her curious inquiries on theological subjects. The Parsee girl was very shrewd and intelligent for her age, and though inclined to confide much in

what Mrs. Graham might tell her, she was still very critical, and often expressed her dissatisfaction with the explanation which she had heard offered. Mrs. Graham sat down, and Sheva, being close to her, as usual, said, after a few moments' thought,

"O, ma, how can I love your God any longer, how can I, after all father has just said; isn't He a very cruel God?"

"My dear," said Mrs. Graham, rather surprised, "you must not speak that way, God is very good, very good indeed. It would be terrible not to love God."

"No, ma, He is not good," continued Sheva, "for if He was good, He would not kill so many poor people, and He would not kill poor little children, and little girls, and burn der houses; I could not love you at all, if you were as bad as your God is."

"Dear child, dear child," said Mrs. Graham, "do not say that, for if you do, God will be very angry, and punish you severely."

"Why should He be angry with me?" said Sheva, "it seems to me dat He is angry all de time. I never did God any harm. Your God is bad, for He won't forgive wicked people, but burn dem up for ever, and ever, and ever; I could not be as bad as dat, you could not, for I'm sure you could forgive dem sometime—sooner, you know, dan de long forever."

"O! Sheva, Sheva," said the almost alarmed Mrs. Graham, "do not speak so; God is worthy of all your love, and of my love; He is better than any one; no matter what He does, it is all for the best."

"Ma," replied Sheva, "you know it is not for de best to burn poor people down in dat bad place, called hell, that Christians ta'k so much about. I heard some Christian ladies say dat dere would be no good people in de world only for hell; and dat God made dat horrid place. Well, I don't want to be a Christian any longer; some Christians are not like you, ma, but are very bad people."

"Not a Christian, Sheva!" said Mrs. Graham, still

more alarmed, "not a Christian! O Sheva, Sheva, unless you are a Christian, you can never get to heaven."

"If dey was all like you, ma," said Sheva, "I might remain a Christian, but you know Christians are very, very wicked, not so good as Parsees or Hindoos, and I don't tink dat your God is as good as de great Ormuzd. Christians fight, and get drunk, and steal, and kill one anoder like dey did yesterday. If Christians was as good as Parsees, dere would not be so many beggars in de streets, and so many poor hungry people going about who have no houses of der own; and so many little girls and boys, not so big as I am, going about in rags, who have no friends to get dem anything to eat. O, ma, I do pity dese poor little Christians, but it seems to me dat de rich Christian ladies, who come to our church, with such fine clothes, don't care for dese little ones. If none but Christians can get to heaven, I don't want to go dere—it must be a very wicked place."

"Sheva," said Mrs. Graham, more seriously, "you are really wicked to talk that way. Heaven is a beautiful place, where God lives with all His angels and saints, and with all the good Christian people that have ever lived, Heaven is God's great throne, surrounded by the blest and the redeemed of all nations and tribes. Neither wicked people nor idolators can ever enter that blissful abode. O Sheva, you must never again be a Parsee, they are idolators, and worship wood and stone; it would be better to be the poorest Christian beggar, for such get to heaven where their sorrows are ended and where their tears are dried forever."

"No, ma," replied Sheva, solemnly, "the Parsees do not worship idols, dey bow to de sun, dat gives us light, and to fire. My own pa, in Bombay, never told me to bow to an idol or an image. Fader Grame has what he says are Hindoo idols, but if Christians are not idolators, what is dis?" The girl quickly placed a large family Bible on the floor, and she stood upon the book to enable her to reach a crucifix which Mr. Graham had brought with him

as a kind of trophy from the south of Ireland. The wood was black ebony, and the image pure silver: "and here, too, is an image of the Virgin and child, and here is a picture of a saint, and here is a bottle of holy —"

"Sheva, Sheva, for shame," said Mrs. Graham, hurriedly pushing the girl aside, "for shame, see what you've done! Why do you stand on the Bible, God's Holy Word?" Mrs. Graham raised the large book reverently; her face was slightly flushed with anger, and poor Sheva stood abashed—she scarcely understood the nature of her offence. "See," continued Mrs. Graham, "this is the Holy Bible that you have been standing on—a thing you should never have done. But then, child," said she, calming down to her usual mild way, "you scarcely knew the difference; yet remember for the future, that this is our Sacred Book, which should be ever treated with the most profound respect—it is God's revealed will to fallen man, of priceless value. But, Sheva, those things that you call Christian idols, are Popish, which some Catholics almost worship; and, my dear, remember also, that Catholics are not true Christians—they are little better than idolators."

The Parsee girl was sorely puzzled; she had heard Mr. Graham say, time after time, that Catholics were idolators, that the Protestant State Church was a fraud, and that Baptists, and Methodists, and others were semi-Popish and unscriptural; and hearing these sayings often repeated, she, as yet, did not understand what true Christianity really was. Poor Sheva, wishing, however, to make some amends for her mistake, rubbed the cover of the large book with a cloth, she then carefully opened it, and on the leaf opposite to the title-page there was displayed a fine engraving of the crucifixion in the same Protestant Bible. Sheva had not seen it before, and Mrs. Graham, who stood at her side, seemed a little confused at the discovery. It then flashed upon the mind of the girl that this great book must be some kind of a Protestant idol, and though she made no remark, she wondered

why the picture of an object of Catholic worship should be permitted to adorn its pages.

The clouds had at last disappeared, and the evening sun shone into the little room, there was a lulling sound from the busy town, and Mrs. Graham, in this quiet time, sat dozing in an arm chair. Sheva, from the ivied window, looked beyond the brightened summit of Cave Hill, and out upon the golden sea, and beyond the ocean leagues that separated her from India, and from those she loved. Child as she was in a strange land, the most touching memories led her again to her distant home, she saw her forlorn parents, and in the very fulness of her heart she wept aloud.

Mrs. Graham started up. "Why, you're weeping again, poor child," said the affectionate woman, with eyes already suffused. "May God comfort you!"

"O, ma," said Sheva, throwing herself into her arms, "take me home, won't you take me home? Shall I never see them again? My poor mother is weeping; my father is sorrowful; oh take me home, take me home, good ma, or I shall soon die here!"

"Stay, child," said Mrs. Graham, hurriedly, "here is a carriage driving up to the house." Mr. Graham also saw it from the lower room. Sheva, on looking out again, saw a gentleman step down from the vehicle and approach the door; she had a glance at the person, and thrust her head out still farther. In a moment or two afterward, she sprung into the middle of the room, her large eyes had a strange light, she gave a kind of scream, as she rushed down stairs, and, just as the stranger entered, she knelt before him, and clutched his knees, and, without uttering a word, she looked up with pleading, streaming eyes into the benevolent face of John Valliant.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN ERRING SHEPHERD.

THE Summer moonbeams appeared to slumber upon Pendell Bay, and the stars seemed to be listlessly gazing down upon the bosom of the tranquil deep, in which they were now but faintly reflected. The lighthouse was like a misty spectre upon the shining waters, and might remain unperceived were it not for its occasional flash, which was, however, almost eclipsed by a moonlight nearly as bright as day. The distant mountain looked like a pearly cloud; and the island and the ships, now dimly seen far out, appeared to be like luminous spirit forms at rest in some haven of glory. Even the very air was in repose; and the ripples that played along the gravelly shore were now scarcely audible.

The scene was calmly beautiful, one in which the lover of nature might truly delight; one upon which those who had been for years tossed about by the storms of life, might look with longing eyes, as if obtaining at last a glimpse of the promised, peaceful hereafter. It was a soft picture of earthly quietude which might easily lead the fanciful invalid to dream of heaven, or the pious hopeful sufferer, to speculate upon the sublime and glorious scenery of the land of the blest. And, at that mystic time, one indeed might have readily imagined that Night had stepped down from her "ebon throne," eager to be transformed into Day, and that she had already donned the fragrant spangled robe of Dawn.

It is said that natural scenery, either calm, beautiful, or grand, would be entirely without value, were there no appreciative observer. The moon-lit lake, the shaded vale, the towering mountain, and the ocean tempest, incapable of thought in themselves, still generate the most sublime ideas in the mind of a spectator; and unless there were some mirror of intelligence in which these could be reflected, the world might as well be one vast waste, or the earth might still remain in its alleged original state, "without form and void."

But there was one observer this night that had looked, time after time, upon Pendell Bay in calm and in storm—one who could enjoy the quiet moonlight scenery, and the placid surface of the deep, or hear with ecstasy the roar of the storm, or look with fearless eye upon the maddened waves, as they thundered wildly against the rocky coast. Esther Meade, seated upon an elevated spot, had a fine view of the spacious bay, but even at that witching hour, she seemed to pay but little heed to the attractive picture; her mind was so pre-occupied, that she gazed as if entirely indifferent to all but one diminutive point upon the horizon. This night she had visited the ancient church with her faithful attendant, old Stephen, and had spent over an hour at her favorite relaxation on the organ, and after she had separated from him, she wandered alone, as usual, to her chosen retreat by the sea.

It was a time for quiet thought or for deeper meditation and Miss Meade now seemed to ponder upon some subject thoroughly engrossing. Occasionally as she gazed out, her look would seem troubled and a stern expression would mark her features. One might think that her quiet and retired manner of life should leave her tolerably free from care, but under a calm exterior she had an active mind. She often thought of her father's circumstances, of her brother in a foreign land, and very often of her own future. She well knew that the humble stipend which her father received for his services, with the small amount which she was enabled to earn, was scarcely more than

sufficient to keep up that appearance of respectability which their position required; she knew that in a few years her father would fall through age, and be rendered unable to perform the required duties of parish curate; and then she thought of the sad possibility of his death, or of his dismissal by the mere whim of an exacting rector—the Rector! She now thought of the man with increasing distrust, with positive dislike, which, on her father's account, she was forced to hide. She had sufficient reason to distrust his seeming regard for her father, and sufficient evidence to suspect the attentions which he was forward enough to pay to herself. There was a time when this very rector cared not to pay a pastoral visit to Pendell for months together; but now, though a pluralist, he had neglected his other parishes and devoted nearly all his spare time to this retired place. He had lately visited this favored spot about once in two weeks, to the surprise of many; and when he did come, he usually sought the society of Miss Meade, paid her many compliments, and even made use of certain tender expressions, which were too significant to be misunderstood, and which, more than once, caused the flush of anger to become plainly visible upon her face. But what could she do under the circumstances? For her father's sake, she was obliged to dissemble—an act most repugnant to her nature. Were she to insult this reverend divine, this man in ecclesiastical authority, from whom her aged parent gained his living, her father might be cast upon an uncharitable world in his old age, and they might be obliged to leave their pleasant, peaceful home together. She had to dissemble! O! what would she not have given to be able to exhibit that contempt for this rector which he deserved! It was a desperate struggle for her to appear unmoved in his presence. There were moments when she was afraid of betraying herself and upbraiding him before her father; there were times when she could scarcely keep from reproaching him even in church before the whole congregation. In violence to her feelings, but in compliance with

the urgent request of her father, she had once accepted an invitation from the rector's wife, and had spent over a week in London, in the rector's grand house; had submitted to the patronizing airs of this condescending woman; had listened to the pretty inanities of the rector himself, and had at last been obliged to accept the handsome workbox which he had purchased for her. Even at that time she had her suspicions of him; his easy plausibility might have deceived some, but she understood him at once; and though he had often spoken of her father as one for whom he entertained the greatest regard, and had expressed his intention of making the curacy of Pendell more serviceable to its estimable curate than it ever had been, yet as time passed, she became more confirmed in the belief that the Rev. George Morton was a heartless, treacherous man; and though the calm moonbeams were still before her, she saw in the future the portentous storm cloud that was likely to burst over the unprotected head of her father.

As the rector's visits seemed now to be regularly expected, Miss Meade often sought excuses to go from home during his stay. Though she wished to avoid him, she found the task very difficult, for were she anywhere in the neighborhood, he would be sure to make some excuse in order to find her out, and when he failed to succeed, which was, indeed, seldom, he became irritated and prolonged his stay, determined to meet her, and sometimes to venture a mild reproach for her indifference. Some began to think that he had grown tired of the wild bustle of London, and that he might possibly make his home at Pendell. He had now his own rooms at the hotel; he did not choose to lodge at a private house, but was ready to accept an invitation to dine with Mr. Meade—the providing of a suitable dinner for the rector was a severe tax upon the curate's resources—or with such of his parishioners as would afford him an opportunity of meeting the curate and his daughter. He sometimes rode to Betnall to dine with Mr. Rockett, his brother rector, but this was mostly when he was on

his way back to London; his Sabbaths were generally spent in the city.

He had, however, lately been absent from Pendell longer than usual, and Miss Meade had begun to entertain some hopes that they would not be troubled with him so often. During the rector's last visit, she had managed to keep entirely out of his way, and he had, she hoped, probably begun to think that his visits at his Pendell parish were suspected by her father, as well as by herself; though if her father ever had a thought on the subject, he kept it to himself, as he did many other troublesome matters. Any way, these hopes were quickly disappointed, for Mr. Morton had unexpectedly arrived that evening; and striving to avoid him if possible, she had stolen away from the parsonage at an early hour, and went to spend a while with old Sarah Afton; then, when it was growing late, she left Sarah's cottage, and went to the church with old Stephen, and having indulged for some time upon her favorite instrument, was now alone gazing vacantly upon the moon-lit scene before her.

But not altogether did this disagreeable subject concerning the rector, occupy the mind of Esther Meade, other matters of a more pleasing nature engaged her. She had heard much of the wonderful improvements lately made upon the Heath property; she was surprised at the almost miraculous change in the manners and habits of the once wild set who had infested the place, and equally surprised to learn of their present orderly and contented disposition; she had heard of the intended restoration of the Manor House, and of nearly all that its humane proprietor had done and proposed to do, and she had heard her father, and old Stephen, and Sarah, and in fact every one that knew him, not only mention the name of John Valiant with the greatest respect, but speak of him as being one of the noblest individuals living. Under the impression that there might possibly be some exaggeration in their favorable accounts, she had determined to satisfy herself, and had asked old Stephen to drive her

down to the Heath to see what had really been done, and she had returned pleased and delighted at the change.

Strange to say that though Mr. Valiant had been at Pendell and in its neighborhood several times, she had never yet seen him. He had once called at the parsonage but she was then absent on a visit at the rector's in London. She had often turned her eyes when at church expecting to see him enter, but he never came; and as yet neither at church nor anywhere else had she met him, and having heard so much in his favor from rich and from poor, especially from those who were considered the most destitute, she was really desirous of becoming acquainted with a person so estimable; with one who though wealthy was neither purse-proud, nor ostentatious, nor indifferent to the necessities of others.

Miss Meade having a great regard for unselfish people, could not avoid drawing a comparison between the Rev. George Morton, the rich rector of Pendell, with his three livings, which paid him nearly four thousand pounds a year, clear of all salaries to his curates, and this stranger whose wealth had already been a fountain of benevolence to those in need. She well knew that the name of the rector of Pendell, as well as that of Mr. Rockett, the rector of Betnall, had been despised by almost all upon the Heath. These clergymen, with little sympathy for distress and less charity for the destitute, were even now anything but favorites, the rector of Betnall still being especially detested; indeed at one period his life would be counted as of little value were he discovered alone in that region. As ministers of the Established Church—the true church to her—they had only brought religion into contempt. And then she began to wonder why it was that that Church with its immense wealth, with its vast endowments, with its titled bishops, its numerous clergy, and its influential adherents, could have allowed such a place of infamy as the Heath once was, to exist in England. From her childhood she had heard of the depredations of the reckless people of the Heath, she had heard of their poverty and

of their crime, and of the efforts which a few benevolent people had occasionally made to benefit them; but these efforts had for some reason been of little or no service. She had read books and reports on the state of the heathen world, and had read heart rending accounts of the labors and sufferings of missionaries in distant lands, and of the triumphant successes with which they had been ultimately crowned; and, years ago, she had many a time wondered why men, said to be so truly devoted had not gone among the half-starved heathen of the Heath for the purpose of winning souls, instead of going thousands of miles away to try and gain converts among the well-fed heathens of Hindoostan. She had reasonably thought, that if obdurate pagans in India could be humanized and Christianized, that a few score of British heathen, only half a day's journey from St. Paul's Church in London, might also be reclaimed. She knew that there were various missionary societies throughout England; she knew that her own church had annually collected vast sums in order that the gospel might be sent to pagans afar off, even while the unfortunates on the Heath, as well as a similar class in other parts of England, were almost totally neglected and forgotten. For years she had heard, through pulpit and through press, of the great endeavors of the Christian Church to make known the plan of salvation to unbelievers, and through those long years she and her poor father had known of those suffering people on the Heath, and had many a time made appeals for them to wealthy Christians, but she had learned from long experience that so long as India, and China, and Japan, and the South Sea Islands, stood in the way, and loomed up before imaginative missionaries, little need be expected for those socially and morally degraded at home. But what a change during the last few months! There was a people long trodden under foot, long despised, long said to be too vicious ever to be reclaimed by ordinary methods now so changed and improved as scarcely to be recognized, and this, too, all the work of one benevolent man, without

the aid or endorsement of any great missionary society, without the assistance of one "duly authorized," save by those whom he himself had raised as it were from the coarse clay, into whom he had breathed human ideas, and to whom in due time he had given his own special ordination.

But what had the clergy of her church, as a body, ever done for the perishing British heathen? She might have answered: Absolutely nothing! She had been informed of the visit of the Bishop of Storkchester to the Heath—of this his first missionary attempt—of his altercation with the old gypsy woman, and of this worse than useless clerical excursion of his Right Reverence, his Lordship, his chaplains, and the other clergy. She had heard of Zingari's strange predictions, but had treated them as the absurd threats or warnings of the professed fortune teller of wandering tribes; that which her father had, however, related as to what he had seen in the little mirror—the likeness of her brother—held before him by the old gypsy woman, caused her no little surprise. She was by no means what is commonly understood as superstitious; no believer in spiritual quackery, but she well knew that her father was neither credulous nor easily deceived, and that he would for no consideration make such a statement to her, or to any one else, if he did not believe in what he had seen; as it was he seemed reluctant to mention the circumstance, but as the renown of the visit of the clergy and of what had taken place, had reached her through other sources, she had prevailed upon her father to give her a more particular account of what had occurred.

While dwelling upon this singular circumstance, and wondering by what means, natural or unnatural, the features of her brother, as well as those of other persons had been produced in Zingari's mirror, she was startled by the appearance of the long shadow of a human form which gradually approached from behind. She turned quickly around, and there stood the dark figure of a man, as if hesitating to take another step towards her; his features

were visible, and though there was a smile to be seen on them, it was ghastly in the moonlight. She knew the person and her first impulse was to rush past him and speed home, but her pride and self-confidence held her to the spot, and without an exclamation, or a single word, she stood up and looked sternly at the intruder; she had little fear at the moment.

"Ah! fair truant, you have not escaped me this time! I would have traced you ten times as far; and here you are alone by the sea, or rather we are here alone, just as I would have it. Oh fair queen! verily you look like one at present. I can scarcely find words to utter a reproach, but, pretty wanderer, I ought to find fault with you; how seldom I have found an opportunity of expressing my admiration for the loveliest of her sex; one to me more beautiful than that picture of serenity around us would be to the eye of a poet."

The Rev. George Morton then raised his hat, made a profound bow, and stepped closer to Esther Meade, whom he had thus addressed.

"You are the rector of Pendell," said she, standing before him, "I am the curate's daughter. We are here alone, and you would take advantage of that circumstance to address me in manner as you have. I shall take advantage of this same to speak freely for once and tell you, that though you do not deceive me, you impose upon yourself when you fancy that I can regard your words as other than offensive."

"Offensive? Great Heavens! Offend you? No, not for a thousand worlds," replied the persistent rector. "Only tell me, fair tormentor, how, or where, I can unburden my heart—a heart that has long been yours—so that my ardent words, without provoking your gentlest anger may make even a faint impression on her who hears me."

Miss Meade, curbing her resentful feelings, looked steadily at him a moment, and then replied:

"How or where unburden your heart, did you say? By

leaving my presence, and by letting your wife hear that which you would have reach my ears; she has a right to listen; she has the best right to know to whom your heart belongs, and I would fain learn from her the impression which your words had produced."

"Bah!" exclaimed the rector smartly, "That's beside the matter; I keep such secrets from her, and from all others," and then he continued in a softer tone, "I cannot leave your presence. O, sweet Esther! were my wife to know my feelings for you she would hate you forever."

"Not if she knew my opinion of you," said Miss Meade calmly. "Not if she knew that I might entertain some respect for you were I certain of your hatred instead of a different feeling."

"Cruel, cruel! Cruel of you!" continued the rector. "Hate you? Impossible! I could hate her, I could hate all else for your sake, Esther. For you I could make any sacrifice—home, wife, children, friends, reputation, everything."

"I require no sacrifices," said she. "Yes, I ask a favor—a sacrifice if you will—leave me, and never dare to address me again as you have done. You have presumed too far; I have suffered long without complaint because I did not wish to give another care to my father, but now I tell you that from this time, no matter what the result may be, the annoyance must cease." Miss Meade spoke with great determination, her eyes told her meaning as she stood before him, and the Rev. rector though he winced a little was by no means subdued.

"Sweet creature, dream not of annoyance from me," said the rector, "I could make any sacrifice for your sake—but leave you I can't. I feel, even after all you have said, that you will yet relent and bear with my importunity. Though I regard your father for his worth, and venerate him still more for your sake, yet you may believe that it is solely on your account that I retain him as curate of Pendell, for you must be aware that he is at present,

and has been for some time, unable to perform all his required duties."

The color that now mounted to the cheek of Miss Meade could not be seen in the pale light. Her indignation was aroused by the man's persistency, and at the implied threat of her father's dismissal. The rector felt really surprised at her manner; he felt that he had been too urgent, or perhaps too precipitate. He stepped back a pace or two, but it was to admire her more fully, for Esther, with her clenched hands, and compressed lips, and fierce expression, had at the time the aspect of a stern but beautiful goddess.

For a moment or two not a word was spoken; she struggling to restrain her emotion, he as if enraptured with her appearance. Presently, as if anxious to conciliate, he made an humble obeisance and advanced towards her.

"Pardon! I most humbly ask pardon. If anything I have said has led you for a moment to suppose that I have not the proper regard for your feelings, pray let me explain my words; if they have offended, let me, sweet angel, give evidence of my contrition."

"You ask for pardon! You care as little for my pardon as you do for my feelings. Why dare intrude or follow me here? asked she, still boldly looking him in the face. Your words are insulting, and your threat contemptible as you are yourself. You, a clergyman! What a mockery! You, my father's employer! What a degrading service! Better that we should starve! Would that there were a thousand now present to hear me tell you that your conduct is a disgrace to your profession!"

These cutting words were keenly felt by the rector—doubly cutting because they came from her, yet he endeavored to appear unmoved as if he had not understood her meaning. He now began to feel that the scornful beauty whom he would win, was not one to be easily imposed upon; and that she must be approached in a different way, and he at once affected a desire to gain her good opinion, even were he obliged to leave her forever.

"Ah!" said he, with downcast look, "perhaps I deserve your reproaches, but not to the extent you have gone. You misjudge me. For years I have kept aloof; for years I have taken the most delicate methods of hinting or of showing my regard for you—an unfortunate attachment, alas, for me; for years I have waited for an opportunity of explaining my position and making an appeal. In a word, without you, my life must be unhappy. Is there no hope?" Then he knelt and seized her hand, and endeavored to cover it with kisses. "O Esther," as we are now here alone, I ask, is there to be no hope? I am peculiarly situated, if I can have no claim on your consideration, tell me what is to be my doom. I shall hold your dear hand until you speak some word of encouragement, even for the distant future."

While Miss Meade was struggling to disengage her hand, a strange voice from a little distance was heard to say: "Not quite alone, your Reverence, not quite alone as you imagine; what a pity that your mission here has been such a failure! Fair lady, if you cannot give a more favorable reply to his gallant speeches, or if you cannot trust your tongue to bid him hope, or to tell his doom, shall I again pronounce it for him?"

The rector was thoroughly startled; Esther looked quickly around her. In front of a large furze bush, that was sufficient to hide a person from view, stood the ghost-like form of Zingari, looking toward the sea. Her right arm was partly outstretched; her withered face wore a solemn expression, and the moonlight, that was mingled with her snow-white hair, seemed like a halo around the head of a prophetess. Though many might have been alarmed at the time—for the hour was late, and the place lonely—yet Miss Meade felt a measure of relief in the presence of a third person, and she advanced with confidence toward the old gypsy woman. She then turned to address and rebuke the rector, she hoped for the last time, but when she looked at the spot where she had left him kneeling, she found that he had suddenly disappeared.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ZINGARI.

L EFT alone, as they now were, at an hour not far from midnight, Zingari stood motionless for some time; she seemed as if intent on watching the retiring form of the rector, and to strain her eyes, as if to still keep him in view. Her companion, who had better vision, and who was no doubt anxious to be assured of the departure of Mr. Morton, could see nothing of him, and it might have been only imagination on the part of the old gypsy woman to think that he was then visible. Miss Meade was under the impression that the rector must have suddenly sprung down from the high bank, in order to run along the circuitous shore, thereby to reach the village and escape further observation. Once or twice the old woman placed her hand behind her ear, as if endeavoring to catch the sound of his retiring footsteps, and as soon as she seemed satisfied that he had gone away, she gave a heavy sigh, and without speaking a word, took Esther by the hand, and led her slowly forward to the grassy elevation which commanded the most extensive view of the Bay that could be found in this retired place. A few dark clumps of gorse were scattered here and there, and having seated herself upon a projecting rock, she motioned Miss Meade to take a place beside her; and then, as if musing upon the beautiful scene before them, or dwelling upon some sad recollection of other years, she continued still silent until her wild and now dejected appearance had at last

inclined her companion to speak: "Poor woman, you look as if you were troubled."

There was another pause, and then Zingari slowly replied with a sigh: "Alas! what has my poor life been—my almost dreary existence—but one continued scene of care, one wild, sad sea of trouble. There was for me a short period of happiness—ah, how short!—in my early days, which was as calm and bright as that scene before you; but oh heavens, how soon came the deep and constant gloom."

The poor woman seemed much depressed, her manner was subdued, and now she drew her hand across her eyes, which were full of tears.

"It would be a black month that had not more than one day of sunshine," said Esther, feelingly, "I trust that your remaining years may bring you peace."

"Peace, eternal peace, the oblivion of the tomb—that must come," replied Zingari, "but what peace can I expect again, for there are some whom I can never forgive, there are some whose vileness has brought me sorrow, and some whose wrongs I should avenge. I can only expect peace in the grave."

"Avenge! rather forget. Ah, what of the promised peaceful hereafter, if we cannot forgive?" asked Miss Meade.

"The hereafter?" said Zingari, "that may be but a dream—I often think so—better oblivion, better *nirvana** than even a broken sleep of life with a dream of misery."

"There is a future—it is not a mere dream—a blest state of happiness for those who can forgive," said Miss Meade. "It is the duty of all to be like our Heavenly Father, to follow His example and forgive—to forgive even those who have done us the most injury."

"Ah! child," replied Zingari, "what a dreamer you now are! Were you, like others, impelled to follow the example of your so-called Heavenly Father, you would

* Buddhistic annihilation.

often be untrue to your own nature, would be inconsistent—at times greatly humane—but most often violently atrocious. Does not your own sacred book plainly record numerous instances of how the Great Being, of whom you speak, burned with revenge, and not only slaughtered the guilty, but the innocent; not only visited male offenders with fire and sword, disease and horrid tortures, but harassed unoffending women and harmless children with fierce wrath and dire persecution. And shall we mortals be more humane than your God; can we be more forgiving than the Divinity?"

After a little hesitation, Esther replied: "We cannot in any manner presume to be equal to the Deity in all that is benevolent and merciful. Those whom God found it necessary to destroy, were cut off, no doubt, as a warning to others; He should have power over the lives he created."

"And if you follow up this mode of argument," resumed Zingari, "if you can so readily find an excuse for cruelty, you will, like fanatical theologians, only prove your Deity like to a fiend—an irate, malicious monster gloating in vengeance."*

"Shocking!" exclaimed Miss Meade.

"It is even so," said Zingari. "By reading your Scriptures, you can come to no other conclusion than that the Jewish Deity—now the Christian God—was like an insatiable fury, jealous and revengeful, ever ready to take offence; not punishing his creatures as a father would his children, but upon the merest pretext, involving all in one common destruction."

"These instances," replied Miss Meade, who felt some-

* Bagster, the great commentator, makes the following extraordinary plea for Jehovah, with regard to the slaughter of male "little ones," as recorded in Numbers, Chap. 31, v. 17. "With respect to the execution of male infants, who cannot be supposed to have been guilty, God, the author and supporter of life, who has a right to dispose of it *when* and *how* He thinks proper, commanded it; and 'shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' Amazing vindication of cruelty!"

what embarrassed, "were but rare exceptions for a useful purpose; a few were cut off, that many might be saved. Our God is a forgiving God."

"Such exceptions," said Zingari, "are too numerous to serve humanity, or to excite a true veneration for Jehovah; the exceptions might, indeed, be called His rule. You would have me think that your God is one that will easily relent, and yet there is a sin, a so-called blasphemy, that He will never, never forgive."

"My good friend," said Miss Meade, "it is evident that you are but partially informed; were you to study our Scriptures carefully, you would find that the Good Being whom we worship, is in Himself perfection."

"Child," replied Zingari, "you are like others of your creed, positive and assuming. You fancy that your book only requires to be read in order to produce conviction and belief. I read that book before you were born; read it to prove to my own satisfaction that it is but a corrupt version of the Sacred Vedas; partly but a rehash of the theologies of ancient nations, many of whom have already passed away. Your so-called holy book describes the Divine Being as like to an ordinary man, with the passions of a human being, going about to be seen and felt, and subject, like a common mortal, to love, hatred, anger, wrath and fury."

"Well, if you will make it so," said Miss Meade with a little warmth, "it is but another proof that the natural heart cannot comprehend the things that belong to God. His ways are not like ours, they are unsearchable."

"Mere flippant words," said Zingari, "words which are too often but the refuge of the credulous and fanatical. We cannot comprehend the Omnipotent—the great Brahm—but when your book is, as you say, inspired to tell us what He is, it but robs Him of His glory; no greater misrepresentation of the Deity is possible than that given of Him in many places in your Bible. It makes Him a God which cannot be seen, and which has been seen, a God of love and a God of hatred, a God of pity and a God of

vindictiveness, a God unchangeable and a God of instability. Your book is full of amazing contradictions which your priests vainly strive to reconcile; and together, your arrogant priests and inspired contradictions have as yet only mystified dupes and curbed the true progress of humanity. Better that the book had never been written."

"And woman, what would the world be without it?" said Miss Meade, looking sternly at Zingari. "What would this great nation be without its Bible and its authorized expounders?"

"A world of more peace and less war, a world of more human happiness," replied Zingari, "a world of more humane ideas. Your great book has consecrated imposition, and made tyrants of priestly pretenders whom you revere as its authorized expounders—how happy for mankind were there no such crafty priests, no such greedy, aspiring, paid agents of mystery. Without them your nation would be more truly great, it would be less plundered, and less impoverished. Your Bible has displaced truth and subverted man's ideas of right and wrong; it has taught men to submit to extortion, and to become reconciled to abuses, to political and theological despotism in every shape and degree. The Bible and the priests, the Bible and the priests, have done all this."

"You are in error," resumed Miss Meade. "Those who will pervert its plain teaching, those alone, only create the abuses which you seem to think exist. The Bible is the great supporter of truth—it is truth itself. It is the great opponent of despotism, and denounces every kind of oppression."

"Wild assertion," said Zingari calmly, "wild assertion, child. If the teaching of your inspired book is so plain, its meaning has perplexed your most learned men who have harassed and bewildered the world with their wild disputations. It has given rise to Popery and its silly rites, it has created a hundred jarring sects: and in this land, as in others, it has established that great nursery of pretence and extortion—a State Church. The Bible is

not the opponent of despotism, it commands men to be submissive to rulers, and history tells us what too many of these have been. You surely know that when that vile oppression, the slave trade existed, the bishops—your high authorized expounders—opposed emancipation, and, like other religious doctors interested in that dreadful traffic, quoted the Bible in support of slavery. I have no faith in your Bible, I sometimes begin to doubt every so-called inspired book—even the Vedas. Inspiration! Alas, I sometimes think that it is but the parent of superstition, the ally of the cunning against the simple, of the strong against the weak, the black shadow out of which proceeds the most degrading of all servitude—mental slavery. You speak of your nation being great with its thousands of paupers—the defrauded—which are still increasing. No, neither England, nor any other country, will ever be truly great while a few are permitted to own nearly all the land, and almost all the wealth; while the great majority have neither land, nor a mere sufficiency; while thousands are slaves to severe labor, and while tens of thousands wander about in the most pitiable state of penury, many wishing for death and contemplating a hurried termination of their existence.

"You speak of your doubts," said Miss Meade, "who has not had them? At times they come like spectres pointing to an abyss, at times like shining angels in the light of dawn. They have been likened to the shadow of truth, to the beginning of philosophy—What are they? perhaps but specious dangers at best," and then after a few moments' reflection she continued: "You speak of paupers, why should such be, why should any one be houseless or homeless? God pity them!—But then there must be some poor, some sickly and infirm, and some weeping like the children of sorrow; all cannot be on an equality as to natural gifts or wordly circumstances."

"I admit that to some extent," replied Zingari, "but is there not some dreadful abuse in the terrible disproportion between the very rich and the very poor? There are

existing wrongs, legalized impostures, and consecrated frauds, which still crush thousands down to poverty, thousands who have vainly spent their breath in manly and determined efforts against penury—how much have kings and priests had to do with this grossly unjust and unnatural condition of things? But ah," said she solemnly, while looking upward and holding out her clenched hands, "I see it, it is coming, it is coming, and Nemesis shall overwhelm the usurpers, shall overwhelm them all. Alas, child, there is oppression even in this so-called free land. I and my people have felt it, we have asked for but little—we met with persecution and I met with my first great affliction, the loss of my greatest earthly tie. Alas for Christian pretensions, your missionaries heard our cry, but ran off to distant lands, and left us to unfriendly priests at home. But stay, as you have said so much as to the excellence and purity of your Bible, what have you to say as to the character of some of its ordained expounders, those riotous reverends, those greedy pharisees, those audacious pretenders, that you seem to think so necessary?"

Esther looked up for a moment at the weird face of her interrogator, and after a pause, merely said—"All are not alike," she then turned her gaze upon some distant star and remained silent.

For a little time Zingari seemed to study the upturned face of the curate's daughter. The moonlight as if mingling with Esther's soft eyes must have reached and touched some sensitive vein in the old gypsy woman's heart, for when Miss Meade turned to speak, she heard a stifled sob, and she saw that Zingari was bent and silently weeping.

Esther really pitied the poor woman, she felt at the moment that Zingari must have had some sorrowful recollection of wrong, perhaps some sad reason for asking such a question as to the general character of the clergy.

"Happy for you, that all are not alike," said Zingari, after an effort to speak, "happy if you can escape from the wretch that would injure you. Happy for me, if I had

never seen one of your clergy. O, child, I can easily remember when you were scarcely more than a little creeping thing loved by Agnes—ah, why did I mention her dear name!—and welcomed by all in our camp. Can you remember crazy Agnes, my poor stricken, betrayed Agnes? O, how like you are to her now!"

"Yes, I can still remember her," replied Miss Meade. "Though many years have passed since she sang for me, I was but a little child then, and I have never heard her history; you were silent as to her fate, your tribe was silent, and my father, if he knew much of her, scarcely ever mentioned her name. But why speak of her as your poor betrayed Agnes?" Esther felt truly concerned, and awaited a reply.

The tears stood again in Zingari's eyes. "A sad, sad fate," at last she replied, "a sad fate for one so young, so innocent, and so beautiful—better that you should not hear it even now. Yet my poor Agnes was betrayed and sent to an untimely grave. Cursed be her deceivers, hurried be their doom!" The old woman now started up, and looked wildly around, her eyes flashed in the moonlight, and she seemed as savage as a tigress that would rush upon those who had destroyed her young. "God's curse be on them," again said the old woman. "O Agnes! I could tear thy foul betrayer limb from limb." And then in a few moments after these passionate exclamations, she grew calmer, and said: "But better let him to his fate—the doom of the wicked is almost certain—few shall escape. I have waited for this, and shall wait a little longer." The old woman became again subdued, she had been almost overcome by the vehemence of her feeling, and now, as the poor withered thing sat crouched at Esther's feet, she covered her face with her hands, and sobbed aloud. In deep sympathy at the moment with Zingari, Miss Meade was so much affected, that she felt unable to utter one word of comfort on this trying occasion; she merely stooped, and then tenderly raising the old woman's hand, pressed it to her lips.

"Angel of the night, daughter of the stars, lily of the moonbeams," at last murmured Zingari, "may flowers ever mark thy footsteps, may the raven's wing never shadow thy doorway, may no hidden serpent ever watch thy path." She then placed her hand lovingly upon Esther's head, and muttered some words—perhaps some prayer or incantation—in an unknown tongue.

"My poor stricken friend," said Miss Meade, "your cause of sorrow must be great, your grief must be severe. I feel touched by your kind words, and would gladly suffer to relieve you; but even now, you can find comfort, if you can, from your heart, pray for your enemies and persecutors, and for all who have brought you this great trouble. Forgive, that you may be forgiven."

"I cannot pray for fiends," said Zingari, hastily, "prayer for such would be but mockery. I might forgive an injury done to myself, but I cannot forgive the terrible wrong done to an innocent creature. I need no forgiveness," she continued, resuming her wonted energy, "for I have harmed none—neither God nor man."

Upon a little reflection, Miss Meade thought it useless to press a Scriptural precept, which she believed the gypsy woman well knew was scarcely ever followed by individual Christians, either lay or clerical; and perhaps never by Christian nations. Zingari was naturally quick in detecting a fallacy, and, in her present mood, would be unsparing in her caustic remarks against texts or maxims so far beyond human nature as to be practically overlooked by priest and people.

"I have harmed none," continued Zingari. "During my long life, I have had many opportunities of crushing those who have injured me, but my nature—such as it is—was often superior to revenge, and I have waited to see retribution come without being sought for. I cannot have long to live; and if you choose to listen, I will now tell you something of my life; and in this lonely place, you shall also hear something concerning poor Agnes, and of her sad fate.

It is now a few months over a century since I was brought to this country by an English family returning from India. You look surprised at this statement, yet it is true. I was seven years old when I left Bombay, and if I live until next March, I shall be 108 years old; and though this is called a great age—there are other persons older—yet I feel more vigorous at the present time than most people do at seventy; a regular life makes the difference, and were it not for my many troubles—for that greatest of all miseries, the loss of one dearer to me than life—and the bitter misfortunes of poor Agnes, I should have fewer wrinkles in my face, and have still, perhaps, some of the dark silken hair, which it was said, added so much to the personal attractions which I may have had in my youthful days. The gentleman in whose family I was more companion than servant, was an officer in the service of the East India Company. He remained in India, and survived scarcely a year after the departure of his family. You, of course, remember the history of that eminent Christian Governor, Warren Hastings, who was sent to civilize, and perhaps to help to Christianize India, and whose career, like too many others of his class, was but one of tyranny and plunder; he was the cause of great disaffection among the natives, and in an endeavor to suppress one of the many uprisings of the time, this officer was killed. The pension allowed his family was not very great, and my mistress, who was a very good woman, though a professing Christian, did her best to make this pension, with a few other resources, answer to support her family, and to educate her little daughter—a girl about my own age—and myself. The family was fortunately not large—the lady and her daughter, myself, and my aunt, who, though a Hindoo woman, and a sincere believer in the sacred Vedas, became so much attached to her mistress as to volunteer to accompany her to England. I was then an orphan, and as I had been a favorite in the family previous to its departure from India, I, of course, could not be left behind.

In addition to this number, we had two ordinary servants. We lived in a pleasant part of England, not many miles from Pendell, where we now are. I was sent to school with the lady's daughter; I was instructed in almost every useful branch, and ever had the benefit of some accomplishments, which were willingly paid for by my good mistress; indeed, I was almost treated as the equal of little Mary, her daughter. But though the lady's great desire was to make me a Christian; though I had attended church, and in course of time had become as well acquainted with the contents of the Bible as the most advanced in our classes, yet my aunt was so rigid in her faith—though by no means rigid in her practice—that she always succeeded in counteracting the teachings of any Christian friends who would have me become a proselyte, and in convincing me, by sound reason and argument, that our ancient creed was far superior to Christianity—was, in fact, the source from which that and all other creeds had been drawn; and in this belief I have still continued and ever shall remain.

Well, in course of time, my kind friend and mistress died; my poor aunt died shortly afterward; my companion—I might almost call her sister—Mary, got married and removed to a distant part of the country, and in less than three years afterward, I heard of her decease. I was now left alone, I somehow found but little sympathy from Christian people, and still less from many who called themselves Christian missionaries. It had been asserted that I was obstinate in my disbelief in the true faith, and that I had treated its teachers with contempt, yet notwithstanding this, and my being looked upon as a heathen, I found some of your State Church ministers approach me for another purpose; they spoke of my charms, and even offered me tempting inducements to become their slave.

Fortunately I was not left without a little means, and I succeeded in escaping every snare. Few can ever tell how many impoverished creatures, how many friendless and destitute women have been lured to sin, and dragged

down to infamy, by the specious, unscrupulous wiles of ministers of the gospel. In her will my kind mistress had left me a hundred pounds; by the death of my poor aunt I received nearly an equal amount, besides a few valuables, and as I happened at that time to visit a camp of wandering gypsies, I found that they were the descendants of an Indian race, that many of them understood my native language, and that their religious ideas were in most respects like my own. I had become disgusted with Christian priests, dissatisfied with Christian people, and stung by their pretensions, and shocked at the dishonesty, the drunkenness, the brutality, and almost the general immorality of nearly all classes who assumed to be superior every way, not only to my own nation and race, but to all other people, that I was glad to be received and treated as an equal by others who were generally supposed to be less honest, less moral, and less civilized. To be plain, I found the change most agreeable; numbers of the English peasantry I had found to be the veriest boors, wretchedly poor, savage, ignorant, and superstitious, such as they were until lately, upon the Heath, and such as can be still found in many cities, towns and counties, of this far famed island, and exceeding, in proportion to their numbers, the degradation of any similar class of people in all India. What a telling lecture might be given in relation to the vast sums of money wasted in extravagant missionary enterprises, and upon the visionary attempts of headstrong, persistent, romantic missionaries to civilize and Christianize the heathen in distant lands while blindly neglecting the thousands of a more vicious, more barbarous, and a more debased population, even in this very land of Britian. Verily, no folly can surpass the vagaries of your impulsive fanatical missionaries!

I had been scarcely a month with my new friends when the chief man—some called him the king—of the gypsy tribes paid us a visit. He was young, very intelligent and of fine appearance. His manner was most agreeable, he seemed to be beloved by all his people, and to me, in par-

ticular, he paid the greatest attention. Ah! me, what happy, happy days! He must have possessed some strange power of fascination, for cautious, as I then was, I soon found that he had won my affections; that the world without him would be to me a dreary, dreary waste. But oh, happiness! I shortly afterwards discovered that he loved, that he worshiped, that he adored me. Then came the rainbow of my life; then came the glorious sunlight of my existence; then came the silvery moonbeams by night—brighter than these; then sprang up the modest early flowers at dawn, glittering with dew; then came the languid rose at noon, yielding its rich perfume in the shade; then came the gentle lily quivering in the evening air, and crowned with the rays of the setting sun; and then again came the moonbeams, and the soft song of the nightingale; and again came the glittering host of heaven to look down upon our happiness. O God! why does not my heart burst when I think of this lost felicity! Is there a heaven that will restore it, is there a hereafter that will unite us again? If so let it come soon. O Seraphic vision of departed bliss, stay, still linger before me, and let thy bright, thy golden, thy beautiful wing, bear me onward and waft me at last to my lost love—to my long lost angel!"

While the shimmering waves now seemed melted into moonlight, Zingari was again stooped and sobbing, and Esther's eyes were streaming with tears.

CHAPTER XXV.

ZINGARI AND ADRIAN.

WHEN Zingari was able to resume her narrative she said: "For over twelve years my married life was almost one delightful period of unalloyed happiness. Adrian and I seemed to have but one soul, one heart, one desire, and that was to make each other happy. I never knew a being of greater nobility of spirit, greater purity of thought, greater simplicity of desire, or one of greater disinterestedness. Our people loved us, and though our habits were industrious, little labor was permitted us, for we were cheerfully supplied with most of the simple necessities which we required; we always had more than sufficient, and were, therefore, well enabled to help many poor strangers who craved our charity or assistance. All was sunshine. I seemed to inhabit a new and beautiful world where there was little or no care. The earth appeared to be but a paradise of brightness and flowers, with intervening green fields, gentle hill slopes, shaded vales, mossy rocks, and clear running streams. We seldom remained long in one place—perhaps a week; sometimes a month; and then we, and a number of our people, wandered away to some other beautiful spot, where we fixed our tents and traded with the inhabitants. We offered them for sale strange little baskets, curiously made ornaments, vases for flowers, fancy articles, and trinkets of different kinds. In most places we were readily welcomed, and troops of children with their parents would visit us on

holidays. We had music, and singing, and innocent games. Sometimes Adrian, or I, or one of our people would play the guitar, and then we would have a dance, in which many joined, under the shade of some great oak; and often, before our departure from a neighborhood, we received many little presents, and many tokens of regret from those who had visited us.

Thus it was for a long time—for years—that we went from place to place. In summer time, and in the genial seasons, we generally selected rural spots which gave us a view of the sea; in winter time we sought some sheltered place in the vicinity of villages or towns. Our industry was constant, our wants were few and we almost always had an abundance of all that was really needful. Though we laid no claim to any portion of the land—we had no ownership in it—some of our people occasionally got permission to cultivate a few roods by a road side; we left the little spot, planted or sown, and returned in due season to dig or reap; and this for the time was nearly equal to ownership of the soil. We in a manner looked upon the wide earth as the common property of all, and many of us often wondered in our simplicity why it was that some had the power to refuse us and others the use of an acre for necessary cultivation, while having or keeping hundreds or thousands of acres of good soil lying idle and unproductive; we wondered how it was that some could revel in indolent wealth, while others—the far greater number—were doomed, or forced, to a life of harassing toil, and extreme poverty; it was to us at the time really a matter of surprise why such extremes, why such apparent favoritism and injustice, were permitted to exist.

The common desire of our little community was to make the most of life, to enjoy its innocent pleasures, and enable others—even strangers—to do the same. In this way years passed. Ah how rapidly! I forgot that there was such a thing as care, and I little dreamed at the time that those days of bliss could ever have an end. Alas for my inexperience! What did I know of the great

world and its wiles? Adrian and home were then the world to me, and while in the midst of peace and felicity, my fancy was unable to conjure up any shadow of approaching sorrow. How often do we forget, while admiring the rainbow, and the yellow tinted clouds, which may appear at sunrise, that these are perhaps but the precursors of a day of storm and gloom!

- As tribes of the gypsy community were to be found here and there in different parts of the country, it often happened that my husband would pay them a visit. This he was expected to do, it was in part a kind of duty incumbent on him as chief man. At first I used to accompany him, always attended by one or more of our people, but in course of time, when I had two little daughters to take care of—one about two years older than the other—I found it inconvenient to leave them, and had therefore to remain in camp with our friends; and though at such times Adrian would make the shortest possibly stay, yet I found the days dreary and wearisome until his longed for return.

It was on one of these occasions of his absence, that our first difficulty, I might say our first great trouble with strangers commenced; ending, alas, some time afterward in what was to me the most terrible affliction. We had but lately moved to a neighborhood which had been but seldom visited by our people. Several of the inhabitants, mostly those called the peasantry, came as usual to see us. We traded little articles with them, and afterwards entertained them and their children with songs and stories; and, as the nights were fine, many would remain with us until a late hour. One Sunday evening in particular, a great number of persons flocked to our camp. They must have thought the gypsies a wonderful people; they found them agreeable, entertaining, and often instructive; quite honest and harmless, and not the thieves and vagabonds such as they had been too often represented. Well, while in the midst of some innocent sport, I think I was the first to observe two mounted men gallop

hurriedly to where we were. It was a summer's evening, and one of the strangers seemed to be heated and angry, and he shouted in an excited manner before he reached us. I then noticed that several of the people tried to steal away, as if afraid of being detected in the commission of some great offence. Upon inquiry I found that it was the rector of the parish with a bailiff that visited us. The rector spoke in a loud and authoritative voice, his words were threatening and his gestures violent; and many persons present, especially the women and children, appeared to be much afraid of him. It seemed that very few of the laboring class cared to attend church, and for some time many of them had altogether neglected to appear there. This indifference no doubt shocked the pious feelings of his reverence, and, possibly anxious for the safety of the souls of those whom he called, 'his people,' he took this method of reproving them for their carelessness; and for that which he called the open violation of the law of the land. This reproof was not very gentle for he denounced them as heathens, infidels, dissenters, and open Sabbath breakers, and assured them in forcible terms, that he would commit them all to prison for their studied contempt of both law and gospel. He then referred to us as being a noted set of wandering thieves and impostors, wily and deceitful, deluding others into unbelief and destruction; and as we were therefore considered even more guilty than the others, we were of course included in his threat of punishment.

Though many of the women were, as I have said, much afraid of this reverend detective, not one of our people seemed to care for the stormy berating of the rector. Even when he became most excited, some of our men only stretched themselves lazily out before him, and smiled and smoked their pipes as if amused by his vociferations; while others tried to reassure those who had been intimidated. This conduct must have greatly enraged the holy man. To be treated with such indignity was evidently an unpardonable offence—he at once ordered the attend-

ant balliff to take down the names of such as he knew, and, if possible, to find out the names of every offender present, in order that all should be summoned to appear before the court of his reverence on the following morning.

Sure enough, next day at an early hour, five or six of our men, and as many of our women, were cited to appear and answer for the offence of Sabbath breaking and profane scoffing. I was fortunately not included among the offenders, and, anxious to conciliate, I thought it best to pay an early visit to the rector, for he was to be the magistrate, and I might say, the sole judge and jury in the matter; but I could gain no admittance, he would neither see me, nor listen to any plea that might be offered, and before the noon of that day, over a dozen persons, men and women were convicted by his humane reverence and fined a crown each, with costs; and in default of immediate payment, each person was to be committed to prison for one week at hard labor. In this extremity, I called again. Few of the gypsies had any money to spare; the penalty might be considered small by those who had means, but it was a large amount to those who had nothing, and I was informed that none of the poor working people who were among the convicted, could possibly pay the extortionate demand; some were absolutely without a farthing, and I pitied them. The rector admitted me this time; he had been probably somewhat appeased by the triumph of justice at his hand. Though I had not seen him for years, I knew him at a glance—more portly and florid than he was when he first approached me with an infamous proposal. He must, however, have forgotten me. He looked like a man that lived high and drank much, and that was evidently sensual enough to seek indulgence of the basest passions. I did not misjudge him. He was more than civil to me—rather too free in his manner—but I thought it best to be on my guard, to say nothing that might irritate, but rather to accept the compliments he paid me. He would, however, admit

of no plea for his parishioners, and to prison they were sent.* The cases of the gypsies, though aggravated by their demeanor toward him, he would, for my sake, he said, take into consideration, and in the meantime delay proceedings until the return of my husband. That evening the rector visited our camp; easy and jocular, as if he had been one of ourselves, or intimate with us for years. I had much to do to prevent him from being insulted; as it was, he got but sullen looks and a frail disguise of contempt. The gypsies can, like others, be resentful, but can also as readily forgive. The rector's offence was not trivial; his treatment of them was a wanton injury, yet on my account, and knowing his power and influence, he was suffered to call and to depart without hearing any offensive observations. The next day he called, and the day after; he evinced a desire to become familiar, and it was soon noticed that he paid obtrusive attentions to a handsome woman, the young wife of one of our men. A quarrel ensued, I could not prevent it, and the rector was driven with curses and bitter reproaches from our camp.

After this, no one could be more base or treacherous; he sent a bailiff to collect the fines; my husband had but just returned, and he called upon the reverend magistrate to pay the penalties, as the easiest mode of getting rid of the trouble, but fresh troubles followed. After the rector had sent some of his poor parishioners to prison, a great uproar took place, and about midnight some of his property was maliciously injured, and some was stolen. We knew nothing of this, for Adrian had determined upon removal from the place, and he had already sent on some of our things: and though the weather had become very cold, wet and stormy, he would not remain, but in his eagerness to get away, he failed to take the usual precautions, and was for some hours under a drenching rain while going forward to our new ground. The next day he

* See Note 13.

felt very poorly; we had barely time to fix our tents and get things arranged in our new location, before he had to lie down; by evening he grew worse, and before it was dark, news had reached us that greatly aggravated his symptoms. We heard that, on the night of our departure, another unlawful visit had been paid to the rector's premises, and that his stables and out-houses had been burnt to the ground; that his horses had been saved with difficulty, but that much valuable property had been destroyed; and worse than all, it had been asserted by his reverence, that it was all the work of the vagabond gypsies—one or more of his outraged parishioners were, no doubt, the real culprits—but in the excitement, our people, who were really innocent, were wantonly charged with the offence.

This report had a very bad effect upon my husband, his fever increased, he raved wildly through the night; by daylight he grew calmer, and obtained a little sleep, and while in this state of repose, he was rudely disturbed by two constables, who had a warrant for his arrest as principal in the arson lately committed. Some of our men became furious, and were fully prepared to resist the constables. Adrian again became delirious, and his other symptoms grew alarming. Among ourselves we almost always treat our own sick, but in this case I found it necessary to send for a physician; his certificate was any way requisite to satisfy the constables that their prisoner could not be removed. It was with difficulty after all that we got these men to leave us, they paid little regard to my feelings, they seemed to care nothing for the distress they caused us, and it was not until the doctor, who was a humane person, gave heavy bonds for the appearance of my husband upon his recovery, that they went away.

Gracious heavens, what days and what nights followed! Prostrate before us all, raving and helpless, lay the pride of my life, the waning star of my existence, my love, my hope, my all. O! God, what a change from manhood, health, and beauty, to the poor, pale, blighted, withering

creature before us! All that could be done was done; the devotion of our people was most affecting. I sat by him night and day, I alone moistened his parched lips, and heard his slightest whisper, and waited and waited to hear him breathe my name. Sleep seemed to have left me forever, but how dreadful were my waking dreams! Days and nights must have again passed away when I seemed suddenly awakened from one of these wretched trances. Was it the awful silence that whispered me to listen? Ha! that was my name. O God! O Adrian! There he still lay, his eyes now pleading to mine. I looked from him to those now around us. It was night and the feeble light cast a melancholy ray; and there stood the doctor as if marking his last pulsations. Would they had been mine! 'Zingari.' Yes! Great God, why calls Adrian now! I clasped my hands and looked from him again in terror. Was it that wild look of mine that bid them weep? O yes, they wept and were sobbing, and some of the little gypsy children who would stay near us were weeping and sobbing too. But I could not drop a tear. Those poor fading eyes then looked upon all affectionately, and then turned again to me pleading and pitiful, as if to look a last adieu. 'Zingari.' My name whispered again! 'Yes, I am by thy side.' By an effort he laid his hand in mine—the blood seemed to rush from my heart. That attenuated hand was now cold and clammy, the touch of death was on it. When I knelt, the others did the same; there were tears, but not a sob was now heard, the only sound was the faint moan of the melancholy night wind. He must have thought it a call for him; his last smile came with his last words—his solemn but his affectionate parting—'Zingari, Zingari, we shall meet again.' "

Here Zingari was once more completely overcome; the tears poured fast down her sunken cheeks, and she was an object of sincere pity to Esther, who now felt totally unable to control her own feelings of sorrow.

After a mournful silence the poor old gypsy woman

spoke again: "It was our last, sad parting. I never saw him again. I must have swooned at the moment of his death, and the lurking fever, which I must have hitherto controlled by some powerful moral influence, had now full sway, and boiled in my blood, and burned in my brain, and left me raving and senseless. For over a month I lay prostrate and unconscious, oscillating between life and death. O, would that death had then the victory! O that oblivion, or nirvana, had come to save me from that terrible loneliness of heart, and from all future sorrows! More than a month had been as completely blotted out of my life as if I had no existence during that period. But reason dawned again, reason that brought me a dread recollection of what had lately passed. How I then wished for death! By degrees I was informed of Adrian's interment; of the refusal of the clergyman of the parish in which we then were, to permit the sacred remains of my husband to desecrate the place of Christian burial. This clergyman had sympathized with his clerical brother whose property was said to have been destroyed by us; and was not Adrian in his sight an unconvicted felon, and worse, an unconverted heathen? No better did he think him; and the idea of permitting him to rest in consecrated ground with the baptized dead of the Church, could not be thought of. Burial was refused. Many of the humble laborers of the neighborhood felt for us, and would willingly have overruled the decision of the uncharitable priest, but they were powerless—the law was on his side.*

The gypsies would not, however, put their beloved chief under ground in a common field, or by the road side, and, as we were then not far from this place, besides having many warm friends among the poor rough people of the Heath, to whom my husband had often been very kind, it was privately suggested that he should be interred at Pendell. He was taken away from me in the night—I

* It is not uncommon for clerical bigots to refuse interment to those who have not been baptized in the State Church.

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knew nothing of it at the time. There was sorrow upon the Heath when his loss was known, and if a rector or parson of any kind had interfered to dispute his right to a few feet of earth in the old grave yard, I believe that these wild impulsive creatures would have torn down the parsonage, if not the very church itself. Our friends fortunately met with no hindrance. You were not then born; neither did your father yet live at Pendell. There was, I am told, a great procession by night, and there were hundreds that were seen weeping for the first time, whose hardened natures, it was said, had lost the feeling that produces tears. That gulleless old man, Stephen Gray—who was then young—had a grave ready. His friend, Sarah Afton, held a lamp; and though there was no religious service, no formal prayer, or no funeral rite, Adrian's tomb was moistened and bedewed with tears, and all that remained of my poor dear husband was consigned to the earth, more like the ashes of a real prince of men, than the body of one accused of crime, and hated and despised by clerical despots who knew nothing of his virtues.

You may have often seen his grave; it is in a remote corner, not far from the resting-place of the ancient Valiant family. Old Stephen Gray can point it out—I must live near it forever. It is my flower garden; the only little spot of earth that I cultivate, There I often watch my lilies in the moonlight, and wait in the silent night, and gaze at the distant stars, until the weeping flowers mingle their tears with mine. While my hand has still its cunning, roses shall ever bloom around him. See, I have one of them here," and Zingari displayed a faded rose pressed close to her heart, "and when I pluck another, I hide this withered thing in the same earth that hides him who was the sacred lotus flower of my existence. From this same grave I have often listened to your music at midnight; and the solemn tones of the organ in the old church have often lured me to dream of a here-after.

'Zingari, we shall meet again.' These were his last words. O tell me, is such a meeting possible? Is there to be a hereafter, a happy reunion of those long separated, a never-ending period of bliss for souls that are immortal? Is there an Everlasting? Can we have a proof of the immortality of a single soul, or of the forever of a created intelligence? Forever! O the immensity of that unending of which time itself is but the shadow! O the unceasing changes of that Forever! Generation after generation to pass away, the mighty works of man to crumble, immense rocks to become dust, great mountains to wear away, the vast ocean to become dry, and the whole earth itself to be dissolved into its original vapor. And then, after eons of ages, suns, stars and planets to fade out and still interminable cycles of time to be perpetually flowing onward, flowing onward into the vast abyss of eternity, and still to be no nearer the end! O, that incomprehensible word, Forever—that overwhelming idea of duration—Eternity.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE STORY OF AGNES.

“A SHORT time after the sorrowful visit to Pendell,” resumed Zingari, “we moved to that place—I wished to be near the grave of Adrian. At first the people of the neighborhood were friendly—we found the working class always so—but the evil rumor of being connected with the destruction of the reverend magistrate’s property followed, and many persons kept away as if afraid of being seen with us. The clergy in many places had warned their parishioners to give us no further encouragement; they were men who had it in their power to serve or to injure, and it might not be safe to oppose their wishes. In old times, as you may be aware, our people were dreadfully persecuted by Popes, and other fanatical Christian rulers. The principal Christian nations of Europe vied with one another in hanging, and burning^{*} and otherwise brutally persecuting them for being diviners and wicked heathens! As it was now, however, we felt that we were suspected and watched, and that the better plan would be to remove to another place in order that time might enable us to prove how false were the accusations against us, and how peaceable and orderly we could be among those that were willing to confide in our good conduct. The people of the Heath proved to be

^{*}In England barbarous decrees were issued against the gypsies by King Henry VIII in 1531, and by Queen Elizabeth in 1563.

our friends. Wretchedly poor and degraded even as they then were, they felt that, like themselves we had been badly treated by most of the clergy; they sympathized with us in our misfortunes, and gave us an invitation to the only place they had to offer. We accepted their kind proposal. Even in that desolate region we found one pleasant spot, one shaded retreat at some distance from the noisy taverns on the Heath. The rough toil-worn men were glad to see us come among them, though stern and almost savage towards most others, and often brutal among themselves, they were invariably kind to us, and many of them, I have little doubt, would have died for our protection; and for years we have lived together without altercation of any kind.

As I said, I wished to be near the graveyard; the Heath is not far from Pendell—you know where our tents are—and I could travel to the old church every day if I chose, or steal away at night, as I often do, to sit by that grave, close to which I must expect before long to be laid myself.

In about six months after my husband's death I lost my oldest child; she had always been delicate, and having been very much attached to her father, she seemed even at her infantile age, to feel generally depressed at his loss. She pined away and died quietly in my arms—another sore affliction—but as she had not been baptized in the Christian sanctuary, in order to save any trouble with the rector or curate, and to insure her peaceable interment in so-called consecrated ground, we took her away stealthily by night and laid her by the side of her father.

Well, you must believe that the additional bereavement added much to my sorrow, but I still had my remaining child to claim my attention, and to save me from the great despondency which might otherwise follow. She grew up to be a healthy, beautiful woman, and, in course of time, she became the wife of a trader who used to deal among our people. He was an honest person, no believer in any kind of religion, and had no national pre-

dilections to interfere with his sympathies in the choice of a wife, or of a friend; and none could be of a more genial or humane disposition. He had sufficient means to keep my daughter comfortably; and their married life, though of short duration, was one of the happiest.

About a month after their marriage they removed to a distant part of England; I was pressed to go with them, but I had decided to remain. Nearly two years afterwards she gave birth to a daughter—this child was Agnes. She was the only child they ever had, and all that could be done by parents to educate and fit her for a higher station was done by them; and before Agnes was fifteen years of age, she was generally considered to be the most accomplished girl of the neighborhood in which she resided. A little after this her father removed to a village not far from the city of Oxford, and they were scarcely well settled in that place before he died suddenly. I visited my daughter at that time and offered her such consolation as I could.—I had only seen her twice previously, since her marriage, once when Agnes was born, and once afterward when she had a severe sickness. I might have lived with my daughter; her husband, often entreated me to do so, but my habits of life were so established, that I could not live away from my gypsy friends, nor at such a distance from that sacred spot in Pendell graveyard.

For some time after this sad loss my daughter continued to reside near Oxford. Though her husband had lost in certain business transactions, still he left sufficient means to enable her and her child to live in comparative comfort. Agnes became a fine singer, and it was not long before she was induced to appear at public concerts. Indeed it was asserted that her vocal powers were a great attraction on many such occasions; and whenever her name appeared on the bills a crowd was sure to be in attendance. Her mother of course felt proud of this. Agnes was even mentioned in the papers as one yet likely to become a *prima donna*, and it was hinted that certain

great managers of London Opera Houses had an eye upon her.

Agnes in person was simply beautiful, in manner modest, and in disposition kind and confiding. She was devoted to her mother, and the liberal sums which she readily obtained for her musical services were at once poured into the lap of her loving parent. In course of time her name as a singer had become famous, and among others from distances far and near, certain students from Oxford came to hear her. Two of these in particular paid her very marked attention; they were divinity students, or nominally such, and one of these was the youngest son of a nobleman. He had heard her sing at the Cathedral in Oxford, to which church she had often been invited, particularly on important occasions, as if to make the services more attractive.

You are probably aware that it is quite common for the aristocracy to secure positions in the Church for their younger sons. If a nobleman has four sons, he generally manages to get the eldest into Parliament with a view to the diplomatic service, or to a higher office; the next one he gets into the army; the next into the navy; and should no other opening be found, whereby an office may be monopolized, the portals of the church are always open; for the episcopate of the establishment have always had a preference for aristocratic recruits; and somehow these scions of nobility generally succeed after ordination in attaining that special spiritual grace said to be so indispensable as a qualification for an Episcopal throne, far sooner than men more learned, or, as considered by many, more worthy.

Well, these two divinity students were evidently great friends; they were mostly seen together; or at least, where the one was, the other was sure to be if possible. There was good reason for this; one, as I have said, was the son of a lord, the other was the son of a poor attorney, whose limited income obliged him to pinch himself, and live as sparingly as possible, in order that his only son might be enabled to gain University honors, and

afterward, perhaps, through the influence of some profligate Christian who had the presentation of *livings* at his disposal, to get a chance of entering the Church. The son of the attorney, familiarly called 'Tom' by intimates, was of a wily, servile disposition, and something peculiar in his manner took the fancy of a fellow-student, the Hon. Mr. Vernay, who made this young man his boon companion on almost all occasions, and even supplied him liberally with money from the ample allowance granted him by his noble father. Tom knew what he was about; by every act he cultivated the friendship of Vernay—friendship with him was more an art than a feeling—and, without seeming obsequious, he still managed to regulate his tastes and his opinions to be in accord with those of his aristocratic fellow-student.

Vernay was struck with the beautiful face of Agnes; her voice thrilled him as no other voice ever did; he soon began to feel that he could not live without her; and it is possible that he would, if necessary, have resigned title and family claims to call her his own. His companion was not slow to discover the impression which Agnes had made. He, too, was somewhat struck with her appearance, and would have liked to make advances on his own account, but, following his usual course toward Vernay, he readily gave way to him; and though he lavished much praise upon the personal charms of Agnes, he took good care to leave the impression that he was, however, no way smitten with the beautiful singer; and he made it a point to turn the warm feelings of Vernay for Agnes to his advantage in other respects.

Vernay, being rather diffident—and more especially so toward the object of his affections, scarcely knew how to obtain an introduction to Agnes; a mere hint to his friend, however, was sufficient. Tom, who could be forward enough, managed to bring the young people together. Vernay had a delightful interview, for which he felt additionally grateful to his confidant; the artful Tom had said much to Agnes in praise of his fellow-student, and it

must be said that Agnes herself felt greatly interested in the noble young man who had paid her so many compliments; and, apart from family connection—a sentiment which could not influence her toward him—she secretly hoped and wished that the impulsive feelings of Vernay might be sincere, and might ripen into love—a love which she could return.

Months passed away, the interviews between Vernay and Agnes were frequent, and mutual love was the result. Already the fame of Agnes had reached London, and a splendid professional career was before her. Operatic managers had made tempting proposals; these, at the intimation of Vernay, she at once declined, and for this compliance he was just as willing to make a sacrifice. He well knew that his father's aristocratic ideas would never permit him to consent to the union of his son with a so-called 'low-born person,' more particularly with one allied in any way to the gypsy race, and that as it would be useless to try and obtain his permission to a connection which would only be considered degrading; Vernay, therefore, resolved to forfeit all family claims and get married privately.

It must be said that Agnes, though willing to sacrifice all for him she loved, disapproved of the hasty decision of Vernay; she advised him to see his father, and if all entreaties failed, he might then do as he thought best; any way, it would, she thought, be better to wait; and it was with reluctance that she at last gave her consent to be clandestinely married. This matter being then so far arranged between the two most interested, next it was considered necessary to apprise his friend Tom of their decision. This worthy student was at the time rather taken aback; he did not fancy that this love matter had matured so quickly. Though from the first an admirer of Agnes, he had sufficient policy to appear indifferent to her charms; but subsequent intercourse had only increased his admiration, and while pretending to plead, or to negotiate for Vernay, he became so infatuated himself, that

the bare idea of her becoming the wife of another made him resolve to delay, and finally to prevent, if possible, the intended union. Wise in his way, he had fully gained the confidence of Vernay, and he approached him cautiously. He advised at once that there should be no unseemly haste; would it not be better to give his noble father some hint of what he intended to do; perhaps if he were to ask him to see Agnes, just but once, he might agree to do so, and then it is possible that his opinion of her might be changed. He would, no doubt, see in her a person not only educated, but one of distinguished talents, and a lady in every respect; and he might after all be so favorably impressed with her, as to consider it no discredit to receive her as a daughter.

Then again he argued delay for another reason. Would it not be better to wait until after his ordination—this would surely be within a year. And again, Vernay, he said, might, by being too hasty in this matter, become blind to defects of character and disposition which might possibly in after years cast a shadow upon his happiness. Not that he could see the least blemish himself, not at all, but such a thing might exist, and, as a sincere friend, he begged of him to take time and give his noble father an opportunity of saying either yes or no in a matter of such importance.

Upon reflection, Vernay consented to be advised by his friend, and to apprise his father of his intention to marry. Agnes also, though not too trustful of her lover's confidant, thought it would be the most prudent course to adopt; and as Vernay, still diffident, could not approach his father on such a subject, it was agreed that Tom, his friend and fellow-student should, on his behalf, call upon the nobleman and explain how matters stood. Tom had been at the Hall two or three times before as the guest of Vernay; and now with a letter from him to his father, he made his prompt appearance at the family seat to negotiate in this delicate matter. He was, as usual, well received, he delivered his message with the most serious

countenance, as if he were reluctantly performing a disagreeable duty simply to please a warm friend. He knew that Vernay's father would never consent that his son should marry such a person as Agnes: and, just as he expected—even just as he had hoped—the nobleman was of course indignant when he heard the story, and would have threatened at once were it not for the artful proposal made by Tom, whose policy it was to make it appear, that, as the true friend of Vernay, he had advised him not to become too intimate with a young person, who, though of fair character, might be otherwise sufficiently designing to lead him to believe that love alone was her sole incentive, instead of perhaps—which it probably was—a desire for a connection with a noble and wealthy family; that in fact he had used every argument in his power to warn his friend of the dangers of a hasty union, but to no purpose. He professed the greatest desire not only to serve his friend, but to save a distinguished nobleman the mortification of the misalliance of one of his family with a person of birth so very humble. Tom's proposal now was, that Vernay's father should request that no marriage of his son, with any person whatever, should take place for a year; and, that during that period, Vernay should travel alone on the Continent, and hold no communication with Agnes, except, it might be indirectly through the agency of his college friend. Tom assured his lordship that he thought he could prevail on Vernay to consent to this delay; the task he fully admitted would be difficult, still he had strong hopes of being able to induce his friend to comply with such a request. A year's consideration might do much to change hastily formed opinions—to weaken this strange attachment—and if at the end of that period Vernay's singular notion remained unchanged some other plan might be adopted to lead him to see his error.

In less than a month after Tom's return from the Hall, Vernay was in Switzerland; his parting with Agnes had been most painful; some terrible foreboding led her to

imagine that she would never see him again. Tom, of course made light of the matter, and, after a time, ventured to trifle about such very strict notions of constancy as seemed to possess her mind: and he gaily assured her that the year would not seem long if she only tried to mingle again in public assemblies. People, he said, were anxious to hear her splendid voice where it could be heard to advantage, and it was, he thought, her duty to cultivate and exercise the great talent she possessed, by the favor of Providence, for the delight and edification of others. Tom, as a divinity student could of course, like all the priestly tribe, interlard his remarks, mean and desiging as they might be, with cant and religious phraseology, and soon after he even hinted that she should not refuse to appear in the opera at London. Vernay, he asserted, would not mind it now; though he well knew that his absent friend had objected to have her make any engagement with operatic managers.

Nearly six months had now passed; during the first weeks of his absence Vernay had sent repeated messages of his love, then they became less frequent, and now for over a month nothing whatever had been heard from the wanderer. Agnes impressed to some extent by the cunning assertions of Tom as to the readiness of some impulsive persons to forget absent friends, began to have a suspicion that Vernay's professions of attachment might have been but impulsive utterances, and that in his travels he had probably met with some handsome high born lady to whom he was paying serious attentions, while she herself was in a manner neglected.

Tom was of course too cautious to impute in plain words that his friend could readily grow indifferent, but inuendoes to that effect were not wanting, and Agnes still urged by his plausible reasoning, and partly through a feeling of resentment at the continued silence and probable disaffection of Vernay, consented to appear in London as a principal singer in a certain popular opera. She did appear, and the applause which followed was most enthu-

siastic. Her success was so great, and so elated did she feel that she could not resist the pleading of interested managers to appear again and again. The press teemed with extravagant comments, and musical critics felt almost at a loss for words to do justice to her voice, as well as to her attractive appearance on the stage.

It was not long before Vernay was apprised of what Agnes had been doing in his absence. Copies of the London papers had been forwarded to him in which her name as the great operatic *debutante* had been mentioned; and hints had already been sent him of how readily the fair Agnes could forget her absent friends while thunders of applause were nightly saluting her ears, and the compliments of even princes were delivered to her in perfumed notes by footmen in gorgeous livery.

More than ten months of the probationary year had already expired. Vernay had been as faithful as man could be, but when assured, even though in the cautious ambiguous language of his supposed friend, that the constancy of no woman could be relied on, his anguish was great, and the depression that followed scarcely left life bearable. He would have returned at once to reproach Agnes for her presumed deceit and ingratitude, but his pride forbade him. He was soon noticed to have become gloomy and reticent, to wander away alone, and to remain restless and feverish during the long nights in the foreign hotel, with none able to whisper one word that could restore confidence.

About this time Agnes had another great triumph; a hundred fragrant bouquets were thrown around her feet, and garlands and coronals of roses were flung to her in profusion; the assumed name of the 'Queen of Song' was upon every tongue, and the papers were again lavish with the praises of the beautiful *cantatrice*, yet even during all this elation, the heart of Agnes was true, and though she thought she had been treated with neglect, her true love never once faltered for Vernay; he had been in her thoughts continually. She wished to win fame more on

his account than on her own, and she struggled to believe that after all he would not have reason to reproach her for the course she pursued when the year which was now nearly completed had brought his return.

Yet another, and still another great musical triumph followed, and one of the papers which recorded the additional brilliant ovations which she had received—she loved to read these in her secluded moments—had also a startling item of foreign intelligence. An English traveler, named Vernay, the son of a distinguished nobleman, had recklessly left his guide while ascending the dangerous heights of Mont Blanc, and had fallen from one of the precipitous icy crags into an abyss, out of which his body would not probably ever be recovered.

Were that icy mountain to burst asunder and reveal the frozen and mutilated victims, and the heaps of undecayed dead that had lain for long years—perhaps for centuries—uncoffined in its avalanches, scattered about in the gloomy depths of its snow drifts, the startled beholder, though of the stoutest heart, would be horrified at the appalling sight; and soon as Agnes had looked upon the terrible words—the last she ever read—that woeful scene must have appeared before her, for with one wild scream reason took its flight and left her to mutter her melancholy complaints to trees and shadows, to hum her pitiful song by the running brook, to wail to the night wind, and to wander a maniac forever.